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6 APRIL 1987

# Latin America Report

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6 APRIL 1987

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## CANADA MAINTAINS COMMITMENT TO ASSIST CARICOM STATES

Kingston THE DAILY CLEANER in English 25 Feb 87 p 25

[Text]

**GEORGETOWN, Feb. 22:**

Talks between Caricom and Canadian officials ended last week on a positive note, reflecting the continuation of the spirit of co-operation which exists between the two sides.

Officials at the fourth meeting of the Caricom/Canada Joint Trade and Economic Committee (JTEC) agreed to continue collaboration on a number of projects in the fields of industry, trade and financial technical co-operation. The three-day meeting was held at the Caricom Secretariat from February 17 to 19.

Preceding the JTEC discussions was the third meeting of the Joint Caricom/Canada Ad Hoc group on industrial co-operation, on Monday, February 16.

Representatives from both sides agreed that programmes for entrepreneurial development and management training have been very effectively implemented and can now be planned on a multi-year basis, although operations under the programme will continue to be approved on an annual basis.

They also agreed to pursue consideration of a new project proposal by the Caricom side on investment promotion.

Representatives noted the positive reports on the progress in developing entrepreneurial skills, in management training and in standards development. They agreed that the programme for standards development should continue, with priority on completing the work on assessing the needs, and designing

the standards infrastructure needs of the LDCs on seeking to implement the recommendations with the states.

There were mutual expressions of concern for finding appropriate arrangements to reactivate work in investment programmes and institution strengthening. These programmes were originally implemented jointly by the CAIC and the Canadian Association for Latin America and the Caribbean (CALA).

CALA ceased operation in 1986, and CAIC is very anxious to find a new partner organisation in Canada to continue the programmes. The financial statement submitted by the Canadian side revealed that approximately Canadian six million dollars had been disbursed between 1981/86 for programmes in industrial co-operation.

The JTEC, for itself, deliberated on matters relating to trade and technical and financial co-operation, and approved the report of the ad hoc group in industrial co-operation.

With respect to Trade, the meeting reviewed the general trends in Caricom/Canada trade. Representatives expressed concern that Caricom/Canada trade continues to be a relatively small proportion of each sides total trade.

Other specific areas of concern raised by Caricom delegates to the meeting included trade in sardines, the level of air freight rates between Canada and the Commonwealth Caribbean on specific airlines, access for Caribbean Sugar and Caribbean branded runs to the Canadian mar-

ket. The Canadian side was concerned about access of Canadian salt to the Caricom market.

With regard to sugar, the Canadian side suggested that Caricom sugar exporters should take advantage of the opportunities offered them by Canada's decision to stop imports of sugar from South Africa which left some 2,000 tons to be filled.

Sugar, however, was imported into Canada at world market prices and there was no country or regional quotas.

The Caribbean side expressed strong interest in Canadian assistance to the various sugar-exporting Caribbean countries with their sugar diversification programmes.

Both sides discussed Canadian overall bilateral assistance (official development assistance) to the region, in terms of country-to-country assistance, as well, as assistance for regional projects in the Caribbean.

The Canadian side announced that about Canadian 93 million dollars were being programmed for disbursement to the Commonwealth Caribbean in the financial year 1987-88.

The Canadian side also announced that a target to double assistance to Commonwealth Caribbean between 1981/82 and 1986/87 had been met. This level of assistance would be maintained in real terms for the next five years.

The meeting ended with an understanding that the JTEC would meet again in 18-24 months, this time in Canada.

— CARICOM SECRETARIAT

VERE BIRD JR INTERVIEWED, DISCUSSES CURRENT ISSUES

Bridgetown THE SUNDAY ADVOCATE in English 15 Feb 87 p 12

[Article by Angela Cole]

[Text]

Vere Cornwall Bird, jun., Antigua's Minister of Public Works and has recently been involved in a Cabinet reshuffle.

In an interview he told of what he saw as his major achievements in the Ministry of Public Utilities, which portfolio he has just relinquished, and of his relationship with his brother, Lester, who is Antigua's Deputy Prime Minister.

**QUESTION:** "Do you think that the recent controversy surrounding your involvement with the airport project has anything to do with your transfer from the Ministry of Public Utilities and Communications to Public Works and Communication?"

**BIRD:** My transfer from the Ministry of Public Utilities to Public Works has been at the request of the Prime Minister who feels at this time that he should make necessary Cabinet changes.

I am also cognisant of the fact that last year when I was in London I heard an interview with Margaret Thatcher who said that every year she reshuffles her Cabinet or at least a certain percentage to keep members sharp.

As regards the airport, I personally would doubt that it could be from that. The Prime Minister has gone on television and explained the situation. The ICAO has sent in its report that everything was in order at the airport; I think it has gone beyond a doubt. As far as I am concerned it cannot be because of anything I have done.

One must expect changes. Life is dynamic, not static. It is important that one carries out orders because in order to lead people you must have discipline within yourself so that you can carry out orders requested by your leader.

**QUESTION:** What have been your achievements since taking over Public Utilities and Communications two years ago?

**BIRD:** I have brought things to the stage where we will shortly have a two million gallon per day desalting plant with electrical generation. At the time it was purchased, it was said to be the minimum requirements to suffice an island of this size, and maintain a fairly good living standard. This will free up the dams so that their waters can be used for agricultural purposes.

The telephone system now has a switching capacity to handle five thousand lines. We have been running the cables and hopefully everything will go well. By the end of the year the people of Antigua and Barbuda will be able to obtain the telephone service they need.

### ***Voltage problem***

In Antigua and Barbuda we have been suffering from low voltage because of the simplicity of the design of some of the present plants. This will be rectified with the new electrical transmission line. These will take the generated current to the various parts of the island. At the same time these lines will provide the new infrastructure which will meet the demands of the new Deep Bay Hotel and all the new condominiums which were not planned for originally.

There is a burning need for a sewerage system. We have been getting together and working on different designs. The loan is available for this. The question is whether there is the will to put in a sewerage system in Antigua and Barbuda now, at a time when the roads are being dug up for the new water mains, cables, telephone lines and major road works etc.



We also negotiated an agreement with British Airways and Antigua and Barbuda International Airways Ltd. that has brought funds to the country, which were not obtainable before, even though the same planes flew the same routes. These funds, if we use them wisely to do other things, in the long run will bring earnings for us which will help to offset our present international debt.

Last but not least. One of the triumphs has been the tackling of the situation as regards the airport, when I took over the ministry in 1984, no sooner was I there than the complaints started to come fast and thick. We were threatened that the airlines would stop coming to Antigua and Barbuda if the runway was not resurfaced. I saw the resurfacing as a priority.

**QUESTION:** I understand that the Government has some special plans for a computer system to involve private enterprise. How will this work?

**BIRD:** In my ministry we were tackling the situation of a data base for the whole island, to put a lot of information concerning the country on computer and to make the system available to local businesses and investors abroad. The data base will be the backbone to access for planning for all requiring information.

For example, many stores and businesses will be able to put details of their business into the computer and with their own 'key word' know exactly what they are doing and retrieve it whenever they so desire. Hopefully Government will make some money as well from the renting of computer service.

**QUESTION:** Are you satisfied with how things have gone at the Ministry of Utilities and Communications?

**BIRD:** I, personally, would say that during the course of my ministry things were being handled successfully for Antigua and Barbuda. We faced up to the realisation that they were certain infrastructural needs which had to be met. If there is no infrastructure, business cannot operate. I say that these standards must be had today in Antigua and Barbuda. I have attempted to do so and I do believe that it is well on the way. One has to think of Antigua and Barbuda in terms of the twenty-first century and not just 1987 to 1989.

### **Confidence shown**

**QUESTION:** You seem to be able to raise money on the international market. How did you manage this?

**BIRD:** I have been able to generate a certain amount of confidence in our country and in myself. It has not always been easy. To obtain the airport loan, for example, we learned late in the game that certain sources in St. Lucia were blocking or had recommended that the loan should not be offered to Antigua and Barbuda. The loan was supposed to be an unsecured one. Yet, after all the vacillation it ended up an over

secured one. However, I had certain friends in France, along with my lawyer, who were able to use their influence to speak to the French officials. In the final analysis it took almost five months to see it through.

**QUESTION:** Have you always been a behind-the-scenes person and if so what effect has this had on your politics?

**BIRD:** I am the worst mixer of any Member of the Parliament. When I practised as a lawyer people used to say that lawyers have to mix to get clients, but there are few places I go. This has brought me a bad name, sometimes. For example, in 1976 during the election; people knew my brother and my father very well as they spoke often to them. But they did not know me. They, therefore, referred to us as 'Bird, the father; Bird, the son; and Bird, the evil one! They claimed they did not know what was in my mind, therefore I became 'evil' and one to be feared. I would say I am not a bad speaker in Court but on the public platform I have not been as good as I should. I suppose that in emulating my father I never thought of trying to be a flamboyant speaker. I tend more to feel that if someone gave me their confidence to do a job, I need to go out there and work and then come and report on it. But the public likes the theatrical side of life and politics. Above all I am a people's man and deal with my constituents on a personal basis by going from house to house whether they are for or against me. But I realise that in today's life you have to have the histrionics. These days, in politics, it is theatre. You are an actor.

**QUESTION:** Would you respond to the rumour circulating in Antigua that your father has chosen you as his successor?

**BIRD:** My father has never had any discussions with me about leadership. It is interesting to note that my father did everything to dissuade me from entering politics.

We grew up at his feet. We saw his triumphs, but we never saw his sorrows. As I told him recently, 'Maybe if you had told us of the problems you had with some of your colleagues; I personally may not have entered politics.' But seeing the way he was always helping people and the good he was doing for Antigua and Barbuda I could not help but emulate him.

**QUESTION:** What of the relationship with your brother. Is there any truth that there is bad blood between you two?

**BIRD:** My brother and I grew up very warmly. We played cricket, and football together; we hunted and we swam in the dams together. When anything went wrong I would be chastised because it was felt that being the elder I was responsible.

We saw little of our father. He was out serving Antigua and Barbuda and therefore could not serve his family as he would have liked. I took a large part of the responsibility in the home as the eldest child from a young age.

We lived in the same house, until my brother left to go to university. I used to write him six letters a week, send him newspapers. I used to write him six letters a week, send him newspapers. We were both popular growing up. As lawyers we worked together on cases that seemed hopeless. Lester, when he practised law, was a most brilliant lawyer.

### **Made a name**

The Bird brothers have always made a name for themselves, whether it is on the cricket field or in the academic field.

During the long struggle from 1971 to 1976 we worked closely. Until Ron Saunders, now High Commissioner to London for Antigua and Barbuda, came to Antigua and changes came about. In 1976, Lester and I sat down and did a manifesto which came from our hearts. It was part of our philosophy; it gave us inspiration to go there and fight for it. But in the election in '84 we hardly had a say.

Labour Party officials did the manifesto, and as a result this lessened, for the party, the camaraderie which existed between 1971 and 1976. I have no quarrel with my brother. With my father as Prime Minister and my brother, as Deputy Prime Minister, I do not see that I have or should have any problems at all. I have never been envious of my brother's achievements — and they have been numerous.

**QUESTION:** How strong is the Antigua Labour Party with the people of Antigua and Barbuda?

**BIRD:** The people must see the progress and the programmes that have been made. They see the large amount of construction going on in the island. They see the number of tourists. The extension to the deep water harbour, the desalting plant. They know that the roads are about to sparkle. All Antiguan and Barbudans are in a position to say we have a great country!

**QUESTION:** Do you think that the Westminster system of liberal democracy is working in the Caribbean?

**BIRD:** Yes. I would say it has worked. No one has said it is perfect. However, our Constitution is also a written one and spells out the rules and conventions which we respect. If you have a system not grounded in conventions and rules then you end up like Grenada, with chaos!

It has been noted that underdeveloped countries need a certain amount of guidance from the top. Direction can take many forms. If it is benevolent it can work.

**QUESTION:** Is your party socialist?

**BIRD:** Our party normally is referred to as one of benevolent socialism. We are pragmatic socialists. When we started in 1939 we looked on ourselves as socialist. We are not doctrinaire socialist. We feel we can take the best of all available systems and adapt it to our situation.

The Prime Minister, the father of our nation, has over the years tried to set this in motion. I would say that we are very fortunate to have had a leader like him that has steered the ship to stability.



MORE ATTENTION TO GOVERNMENT SCHISM: ALP MEETS WITH ATLU

Report on ALP-ATLU Meeting

St Johns THE WORKERS VOICE in English 11 Feb 87 p 1

[Text]

When the leaders of the Antigua Labour Party and the Antigua Trades and Labour Union met at Dutchmans Bay in order to continue their Caucus from the previous Sunday, Cde. leader in his opening address to the hundred plus delegates who attended, called upon the leaders of the Labour Movement to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the trust which the people of this country have put into them. He told them that in recent weeks many persons from all walks of life, have been complaining to him that they were very concerned over the apparent problems which the government was facing and wanted something done to arrest the situation.

The Rt. Hon Prime Minister in an apparent reference to his ministers told the leaders that the "People were depending on them to make sure that the excellent economic growth which this country was currently enjoying, must continue (6.5% growth for 1986).. He said that the rank and file and

the business community wanted labour to remain in power at least until the end of the present century. He therefore called on all present to forget their differences with each other, and put the country before self and leave the caucus as one with the determination to see to it that the wishes of the people were fulfilled.

Cde. William Robinson who chaired the proceedings jointly with the Prime Minister called upon the government to go back to the days when the A.T.L.U. was treated as an equal partner to the ALP. He said that in past time the union always had a say in the selection of candidates for the General Election, through the different sections over the country. Cde. Precident also stressed the concern of the Union about the apparent disunity which was now manifest in the Government. He called on them to get their act together as the people out there were depending on them.

The Chairman of the party Cde. Lester Bird in a moving address

called on Cde. Leader to place more confidence in his ministers who were no longer inexperienced as some seven of them had over eleven years of experience as Ministers of Government. He mentioned what he thought could be solutions to the problems which the government was facing. He ended by appealing for a genuine truce and not the papering over the cracks. Secretary John St. Luce, in a more optimistic mood, outlined the achievements of

the Party since 1971 and said that he was certain that the Party would win the next elections due in 1989. He also spoke about the economic boost which the country was presently enjoying.

The gathering was also addressed by the Gen. Sec. of the A.T.L.U., the president of the Womans Action Movement, Cde. Senator Millicent Percival and ALP Youth President Cde. St. Clair Simon. The Caucus ended on a very optimistic note.

#### More on ALP Caucus

St Johns OUTLET in English 13 Feb 87 pp 1, 3

[Text] The ALP Caucus which broke up last on Sunday February 1, in utter disarray was resumed on Sunday February 8, and was a virtual non-event as the ALP more and more proves incapable of resolving its own deep-seated crisis which has paralysed the Cabinet and the government.

Those absent at the last Caucus, included controversial resigned, Beg-back Minister of Labour Adolphus Freeland, also absent last time and present this time was, the new Mr Clean in the ALP, Minister of Education Reuben Harris, whose 45 page Documentary Brief to the Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation into the Rehabilitation of the V. C. Bird International Airport has shaken the ALP to its foundations.

The Caucus proceeded without a single word being said by either the centre of the controversy My-hands-are-clean, Vere Runway Bird jr or Mr Clean, Reuben Harris. Both sat throughout the caucus without uttering a word.

The centre-piece of the ALP Caucus, was not the AT&LU resolutions calling for the reduction of the Cabinet and the dismissal of Antigua's High Commissioner in London Ron Sanders. This is a rare instance of a Trade Union urging on a government the wrongful dismissal of a worker--in this case a diplomat!

Stealing the limelight was Queen Cutie live-in companion of Prime Minister V. C. Bird. Queen Cutie 27, long thought to be the power behind the throne emerged from the bedchamber into the political limelight for the first time in the councils of the ALP. She was accompanied into the Dutchman's Bay meeting room by a substantial entourage. However, during the course of the Caucus she too said not a word.

Queen Cutie has been the cause of much of the bad-feeling in Cabinet and is reported to have slammed the phone on Deputy Prime Minister Lester, on more than

one occasion, when he called to speak to the Prime Minister on matters of the State.

On another occasion, Deputy PM Lester Bird needed to consult with Prime Minister Bird on the phone and fearing another tongue-lashing from Queen Cutie, after which the phone would be slammed, had his Minister without Portfolio Hugh Marshall call. He too received the same treatment from Her Royal Highness the Prime Ministeress.

Therefore did Deputy PM Lester Bird in his presentation at the Caucus openly scold Prime Minister Bird, 77 for having "a kitchen Cabinet". It was an oblique reference to Queen Cutie's Cabinet which Lester Bird alleged "ran the government" over-riding decisions of the legitimate Cabinet".

Oddly enough, Lester Bird, following these remarks virtually identified PM Bird as being part of the problem in the ALP. The obvious conclusion is that he could not be part of the solution.

PM Bird and his Deputy Lester Bird virtu-

ally clashed again when PM Bird used the term that there are "gangs" in the Cabinet. Deputy PM Lester Bird took strong exception to this term, reminding the Caucus that PM Bird had castigated his entire Cabinet for being "fat" obviously with ill-gotten gains from public office and now he was using the expression gangs. According to Deputy PM Lester Bird, the PM Bird was preaching 'Peace on one hand and War on the other'. The Queen "chuptzed" as Deputy PM Lester Bird made this rejoinder, but otherwise said nothing.

The physical emergence of Queen Cutie, in the politics of the ALP, ALP insiders say, that she has come out in the open to strengthen PM Bird's hand if he ever weakens, and decides to give way to younger leadership.

The ALP Caucus which proved an impossible forum in which anything could be meaningfully discussed let alone resolved ended with a decision that all elected ALP members and Senators will meet for special retreat this Sunday.

#### Harris Report to Airport Inquiry

St Johns OUTLET in English 13 Feb 87 pp 1, 2

[Text] At this moment Reuben Henry Harris, Minister of Education and Culture, and more importantly at this time, writer of the 45 page expose entitled Documentary Brief to the Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation into the Rehabilitation of the V. C. Bird International Airport is surely caught between a rock and a hard place.

On public radio and TV as well as in Cabinet Harris was told by Prime Minister V. C. Bird that any Minister is free to appear before the Investigation with the facts they have.

On the other hand Harris had been told by Prime Minister Bird not to submit his Documentary Brief. He is caught like a rat in a trap. What will he do Submit or not Submit? Like Shapewear's Hamlet, Harris is indecisive, and travelled to Montserrat to make up his mind.

## PM-Alarmed

What has most alarmed Prime Minister V. C. Bird and Minister Vere Runway Birdway jr is Harris' statement at the end of his Documentary Brief which states 'Should the Commission need any documentary evidence to the references I have made in this presentation I would be happy to supply it.'

That stunning statement has thrown both Prime Minister Bird and centre of the controversy Vere Runway Bird

jr into a complete panic. The documentary evidence available to Harris as a Minister is no doubt compelling and irresistible. That is one thing.

But as aides to Vere Runway Bird jr admitted if Harris can have such documentary evidence, so does the government as a whole, and so must the Prime Minister.

Why then did not the Prime Minister act on the basis of the documentary evidence which both he and Minister Harris and other Ministers have? Was and is the Prime Minister covering-up? Is Harris blowing the Prime Minister's cover-up? Can the Prime Minister allow Harris to blow his cover?

Or can Harris continue to sup at the Cabinet table with corruption and live with it as if nothing happened? Time alone will tell.

## FANCY-FOOTWORK

But Harris was most effective in revealing all the fancy footwork behind the scenes which led to this appalling mess. Harris, for instance, proved that Sabourette de Nedde was Director and Chairman of Building Finishing System, (BFS) which got the loan and contract to rehabilitate the Airport. Harris also proved that the same de Nedde was, at one and the same time, Special Advisor to the Antigua delegation negotiating with the same BFS of which he was Chairman and Director. And worse that the legal firm of which Vere Bird is head, was at the very same time of the negotiations the legal

representative of BFS with which he was negotiating. He was in effect, negotiating with himself, for himself, by himself, and advised by himself, while representing himself.

Added to that is Harris' concluding point, when he wrote at page 45 of his Documentary Brief "The Minister of Public Utilities [Vere Bird jr] appointed Maryna [his company] the Engineers, and further appointed the said Maryna supervisor to supervise itself". Himself supervising himself.

## WHAT A SITUATION!

But perhaps the most telling blow is Harris subtle insinuation that the Prime Minister and/ or Vere Bird went so far as to change the terms of Reference given to the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) which was invited by the Bird government to report on the expenditure and the work done at the airport.

Harris is very subtle on this point and we have to follow him closely.

Writes Harris at page 17 of his Documentary Brief "According to the FAA Report its purpose is to present "an evaluation of the runway pavement resurfacing at the V.C. Bird International Airport, Antigua W.I. This evaluation consists of a review of the pavement design, test evaluation, and other pertinent data to determine the suitability of the overlay".

Then Harris writes immediately following this amazing paragraph :

"This purpose fell short of what it is understood the government's intention



was, that is, to look at value [money] in terms of **extent and quality of work**. Probably the **full government's** intention was **not** communicated to the FAA officials".

**What a situation!** The government, that is, the Cabinet, decides to ask the FAA to determine if the amount of money spent on the airport overlay was equivalent to the work done. In short, whether or not there was a rip-off.

Then person or persons intervered between the Cabinet decision and the FAA, and instead of asking the FAA to establish whether the money was spent as intended, the F.A.A. was asked "to determine the **suitability** of the pavement overlay"!

A reasonable, if not the only reasonable inference, would be that Prime Minister V.C. Bird and then Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation Vere Runway Bird jr, changed the FAA terms of reference to deflect the FAA from pronouncing on the rip-off.

But Harris will not be deflected and will not and did not leave the matter there.

### 5 INCHES BECOME 3

At page 19 he quotes the secret FAA Report already revealed by Outlet [See Outlet Front page story January 30, 1987] to good effect thus:

"Even though the design was based on a minimum 3 inch overlay there were many of the cross sections which were 2.75 inches, some which were 2 inches and a few which were as low as 1.5 inches".

Harris then shows that the resident inspector's reports by Vere Bird-de Nedde's company, Maryna, approved this fraud.

And then he proceeds to show that a 4 inch **bituminous** overlay, promised by the French contractors "is the equivalent of a 5.35 inches **asphalt** overlay".

And then backs this up with the indisputable opinion of Consulting Engineers Partnership Ltd (C.E.P.) to which firm Mr. Al Wason, the first consulting engineer, referred the proposal.

The Consulting Engineers Partnership (CEP) in turn gave this opinion "The **minimum** information needed to determine the **thickness** of the bituminous overlay would be the subgrade strength, the condition of the existing pavements, the loads imposed by the aircraft and environmental conditions.

"This information was not provided but, based on our experience and knowledge of bituminous overlays on pavements containing reflection cracks -which we understand is what presently exists - we would **not** have expected a bituminous overlay of less than 125mm, about 5 inches, to be used".

Needless to say 5 inches was not used, but 2.75 inches, 2 inches and at times 1.5 inches.

### THE FORMULA

Harris then proceeds by mathematical formula, to compute the rip-off based on the substantial 4 inch overlay promised by BFS thus at page 42

"The deviations are as follows:

4 inches minus 2.75 inches = 1.25;  
4 inches minus 2 inches = 2 inches,  
4 inches minus 1.5 inches = 2.5 inches.

The average deviation is therefore 1.25 inches + 2 inches + 2.5 inches divided by 3 = 1.83 inches.

He draws the answer to his equation as he shows "that 1.83 inches is **46 percent** of 4 inches."

Then Harris proceeds "The reality here is the Contractors have **only used 54 per cent** of the money allocated for cost overlay at the V.C. Bird International Airport".

Harris is not done yet. He draws the nocse. He wrote.

### THE RAKE OFF

"If the figure remained US\$4 million as BFS/CM bid at first, where is the remaining US\$1,840,000?"

And then Harris adds for good measure "If any revised bid of the Contractors increased the cost of the overlay above US\$4 million then more has been **raked off** by BFS-Maryna Ltd".

Remember now that Harris has shown that then Minister of Public Utilities Vere Bird's side-kick was Director and Chairman of BFS and refers to a signature

to this effect. Remember too, that de Nedde, Chairman and director of BFS, with whom Minister Vere Bird is negotiating is **also** Special Adviser to Minister Vere Bird in the negotiations. Remember also, that then Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Vere Bird, as Harris showed, was head of the law firm **Bird and Bird**, which **at the same time** was legal representative of the same : BFS with whom he is negotiating. Then remember as well, as Harris showed, that in the same Maryna both Vere Bird and de Nedde **are** shareholders. And then remember that, Harris showed that the average **"rake-off"** from the **overlay alone** was 1 million 840 thousand US dollars out of U.S 4 million dollars!

**Harris case in his Documentary Brief** is both compelling and irresistible.

### Dispute Over Harris Brief

St Johns OUTLET in English 13 Feb 87 p 8

[Editorial: "Untangling the Web"]

[Text]

There is absolutely no doubt that the 'Documentary Brief to the Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation into the V.C. Bird International Airport by Hon. Reuben Harris, 26th January 1987' exists.

Prime Minister V.C. Bird, Vere Bird jr and the entire Cabinet know that to be a fact. The members of the Antigua Labour Party and the Antigua Trades and Labour Union who were present at the chaotic caucus held on Sunday, February 1st at Dutchman's Bay are also aware of the existence of the Harris memorandum.

Yet on Monday night, (Feb. 9th) the Bird controlled television and radio stations carried a release in which the Investigator into the V.C. Bird International Airport, Sir Archibald Nedd, was quoted as saying that up until Monday afternoon, neither

he nor his secretary had received any such Memorandum.

The media releases suggested that Sir Archibald was referring to the front page article captioned 'Great Courage shown as Harris Tells All about Airport Rip-off' which appeared in the Friday, February 6th issue of Outlet. According to the Media releases, the investigator stated that the Outlet lead story suggested that he was in possession of the Harris Memorandum. ZDK radio stated that Sir Archibald expressed annoyance and disgust at the article while ABS radio and TV quoted him as saying that "it was embarrassing to the public".

It was unfortunate that the eminent : jurist said those words and that he found it necessary to express annoyance and disgust at the Outlet lead story which

once again confirmed that there were irregularities, rip off and fraud in the resurfacing of the V.C. Bird International Airport. Contrary to Sir Archibald's interpretation, the public found the Outlet article which detailed Harris' investigation into the US\$11 million loan most informative, enlightening and indeed most courageous.

It would have been sufficient for Sir Archibald to declare that he had not received the Harris Memorandum which was clearly addressed as the **'Documentary Brief to the Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation into the V.C. Bird International Airport'**.

Even the personnel at the two radio stations know that the Harris memorandum exists and that it was addressed to **'The Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation'**.

Incredibly enough, on the same Monday night, ZDK radio, in a release immediately preceding the investigator's remarks read a press release from the **Prime Minister's Office** which confirmed the Outlet lead story that the Harris Memorandum exists. The press release emanating from the Prime Minister's office and carried on ZDK radio on Monday night stated that acting in accordance with the Prime Minister's directive, that Cabinet members were free to appear and submit information to the investigation, the Minister of Education, Reuben Harris had submitted a Memorandum to the Sir Archibald Nedd investigation into the V.C. Bird International Airport.

Amazingly, the exact press release, originating from the Prime Minister's office was carried on ABS radio on Friday night (Feb. 6th) and the following morning.

That press release, carried on both Bird controlled radio stations within the space of three days clearly indicates that the highest circle within the ruling ALP government is aware that the **"Documentary Brief to the Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation into the V.C. Bird International Airport"**, by Hon. Reuben Harris, 26th January 1987 exists.

Oddly enough, but to no one's surprise, ABS radio did not repeat the press release on Monday night. The official directive to suppress it came too late however. The cat was out of the bag and the tangled web woven by the Bird regime had again entrapped it. Somehow, officialdom forgot about ZDK radio.

The question must be asked Did Sir Archibald hear the ABS press release on Friday night and Saturday morning? If so, he was duty bound to label the press release emanating from the Prime Minister's office as 'annoying', disgusting and embarrassing' as he did the Outlet lead article. Did he hear the ZDK radio release on Monday night? If so, he is duty bound, if he has not yet received the **Harris Memorandum** by today, **Friday, February 13**, to address himself to that release from the Prime Minister's office, today, Friday when the investigation reconvenes.

Not to do so would lead to a more pertinent question. Is the impartial investigation taking sides? We think not! What is patently obvious is that the Bird regime is clearly bent on a course of disinformation. The Prime Minister's press release stated that Cabinet ministers are free to appear in person or submit information to the investigation. The Prime Minister's press release further reveals and confirms that the Harris Memorandum, does exist and was submitted.

In reality, it appears as if the Prime Minister has issued another directive to his Cabinet, warning its members of consequences of appearing before or submitting information to the investigation. Harris is now in a quandary. To submit or be himself submitted to Bird corruption!

If any letter is addressed to any individual signed and dated, it is only logical for one to assume that the letter is intended for that person and that he has received it.

To date, Sir Archibald Nedd, Investigator into the V.C. Bird International Airport, has not received the **Harris Memorandum**



addressed to the 'Sir Archibald Nedd investigation'.

It would be proper for Sir Archibald to ascertain why not. It would be incumbent upon him to investigate the release from the Prime Minister's office carried on Radio ZDF and ABS. Consequently, he should ask the ruling party for the memorandum which was addressed to him.

Or ask the same newspaper which he admonished on Monday morning to provide him with a copy.

At any rate, Sir Archibald Nedd is duty bound to get the Harris Documentary Brief, or else he would be **seen** not to be pursuing a full investigation. Justice, we remind, must not only be done but must be **seen** to be done.

#### ATLU Boycott of UNDP Protest

St Johns THE WORKERS VOICE in English 14 Feb 87 p 1

[Text]

The u.N.D.P. has sent an invitation to the General Secretary of the Trades and Labour union inviting its members to join them in demonstration today. The Union declined the invitation because it did not know what the demonstration was all about.

The letter of invitation states that the demonstration was to force Vere Bird Jr. to resign, and for the Government having scaled down the enquiry into the expenditure of the eleven million dollars loan in order to re-habilitate the V.C. Bird International Airport, to an investigation. In an unanswered reply to the letter the A.T.L.U. pointed out that it did not know what the UNDP wanted Vere Bird Jr. to resign from. What if his Ministry or his seat in Parliament? And as far as the A.T.L.U. was concerned from the onset the release from the Government stated that there was to be an investigation; not an 'enquiry'. The Union views a demonstration

as a very serious matter and is not prepared to encourage its members to involve themselves in any move which is simply made for the political advancement to some middle class amateur politicians.

The Union is of the view that a proper investigation is being conducted into the 'French loan' by an impartial and qualified Judge, who cannot be influenced in any way and in whom this newspaper has unlimited confidence. This is the time for all those who wish to accuse Vere Bird Jr. and some of his French colleagues of having misappropriated a portion of the 11.1 Million U.S. dollars, should go before Justice Nedd and tell all they know. Even a Cabinet Minister has written a 45 page brief stating quite simply and bluntly what he thought was wrong with the loan.

This document, inadvertently fell into the hands of some members of the public, including opposition politicians.

One would expect them to study the accusations in the brief and tell it all to the Judge. Even some ministers who may have voiced their reservations over the alleged inflation of the 'French loan' has been given permission by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister to appear in person before Justice Nedd and tell all they know. There is only one stipulation, that any evidence from Cabinet ministers must be given in Camera. There is no question of scaling down the enquiry to an investigation. If the opposition politicians do not give evidence before the investigation, then one can only conclude that they have little or no faith in the Chief Justice or that they have nothing to say.

This newspaper is convinced that should the Judge find Vere Bird Jr. as having misbehaved in Public office or has been involved in any attempt to defraud the people of Antigua and Barbuda, by 'ripping off' any portion of the loan, then he would be asked to resign his ministry immediately and the report from the investigator made public. So what is the political demonstration for? Are you power hungry people really asking the people to demonstrate against progress? Antigua and Barbuda has never yet in its history enjoy such prosperity. Almost everyone who wants to work has a job, their children sent to school, fees paid promptly, wages ahead

of all the OECS countries, no shortage of food nor clothes, no hunger, no escalating crime rate, no unnecessary work stoppages, no victimization, lands for locals, homes being built all over the island, U.S. currency available all over the place just like the E.C. Fridges, T.Vs and new cars for almost every family, a new network of roads being built and re-surfaced and every-body "Fat". Do you really want people to demonstrate and jeopardize all this? You people must be crazy! Antigua and Barbuda are way ahead of all our neighbours, do you want to slow us down. Never happen.

We are willing to concede that the behaviour of a few of the present set of Government ministers leave a lot to be desired, especially those who place their own business interest above those of the people. But those people can be dealt with at the polls. This newspaper does not intend to endorse nor support any candidate who is prepared to use his elective office to propel him into business. We endorse persons who are willing to serve the people first and not themselves. We therefore implore on the people of this country to protect what gains and progress which we have made over the last decade and not allow any person or group of persons to take us back to the terrible years of 1971-75. The March therefore is Off.

## Failure of Protest

St Johns HERALD in English 20 Feb 87 pp 1, 2

[Text]

**The Opposition United National Democratic Party (UNDP) staged a demonstration in St. John's last Saturday, calling for among other things the resignation of Vere Bird Jr, who is at the centre of the airport controversy.**

But while all opposition groups agree that Vere Bird Jr. should resign, last Saturday's demonstration only served to widen the gap between the two main opposition parties, the UNDP and the leftist Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement

(ACLM), which did not participate in the march.

ACLM leaders are furious with the UNDP for calling a demonstration based along party lines. The socialist group is also angry with the UNDP for "stealing its thunder" over the airport issue.

A letter published on the front page of last week's Outlet, ostensibly signed by "For a national demonstration" but which in style reflect the pen of Tim Hector, accused the UNDP of rushing "ahead of everybody". The conclusion drawn is that ACLM interprets the UNDP's call for a demonstration along partisan lines as a self serving attempt to maximise

political benefits from the issue.

It is clear from the pronouncements of the UNDP's leadership prior to the march, they felt that they had the support of the masses and that, "we do not need the ACLM", was what they surmised. "ACLM doesn't have any real support anyway," one was overheard saying.

The differences between both parties go much further than this, however. At the root of the problem is the stern warning the UNDP received from the British and United States Governments not to associate in anyway with the left leaning ACLM, which has

strong ties with communist Cuba and Libya, and which both governments have accused of spreading international terrorism.

The US and British decree to the UNDP "no marriage of convenience with the ACLM" has virtually assured that the likelihood of a merger or National Alliance between the two opposition groups is as remote as a union between The United States and the Soviet Union.

The demonstration was also instructive for another reason. It was a demonstration which proved that UNDP leader, Ivor Heath lacks of political savvy, acumen and organizational skill.

For, why else would his party proceed to organize a march with a crowd estimated at 200-250 persons attending in this their first public show of support. It was an important test for the UNDP, for, while the march was ostensibly planned to "ask for the immediate resignation of Minister Vere Bird Jr," the party was contemplating a massive show of support to garner pressure both locally, regionally and internationally to call on the ALP government to resign. It did not happen. The 200-250 persons who turned up were mainly former PLM, -former-UPM-now-UNDP diehards. Noticably present, was former PLM Political Leader and Premier, George Walter, just one pace behind Dr Heath and the UNDP's leaders. Also present were ex-ministers Victor McKay and Gerald Watt.

The march started off close to 1:00 p.m., but not before an argument developed between Dr Heath and his Deputy, Baldwin Spencer, apparently over when was the right moment to start.

As they moved off, an actual head count was conducted on the marchers. It said 167 persons were at the start. When the demonstration reached Lower Market Street, that number increased by roughly another 75 persons.

They chanted a slogan, "Everybody wants to know how de airport money go." At the end a 3-man delegation led by Dr Heath went to the Governor General to present a petition outlining their demands.

Thus the demonstration, a failure of major proportions, ended as uneventful as it had started. The UNDP had made itself the laughing stock of not only Antiguan and Barbudans, but also the Caribbean.

It took the Anti-Apartheid Organization to distribute leaflets, not about the demonstration, but why sanctions must be applied against South Africa. This event, insignificant as it may seem, only further highlights the shortcomings of the UNDP, which did not recognise an opportunity to disseminate information.

Prime Minister Vere Bird's summation of the march is most apt, "old wine in old bottles."

#### ALP Countermeasures

St Johns HERALD in English 20 Feb 87 pp 1, 2, 8

[Text]

**At the time when the Opposition United National Democratic Party leaders were squabbling amongst themselves about when to start their ill-conceived demonstration, the leaders of the Ruling Antigua Labour Party were meeting to re-affirm unity as members of the party and members of the Cabinet.**

Prime Minister and Political Leader, Rt. Hon. Vere Bird together with Deputy Prime Minister and Party Chairman, Hon. Lester Bird, called a joint press conference at the Cabinet Chambers with

all members present, to report on the outcome of the series of top level meetings and consultations among the party leadership. These meetings have been taking place over the past three weeks.

The Prime Minister began by clarifying his statement made last month, that his ministers have become "fat". He noted that this statement has been largely misconstrued, especially by the Outlet Newspaper. "When I said the ministers had become 'fat', I meant that they had become big and powerful," he explained. He added that several of his ministers had had long years as ministers and thus had acquired much experience. "They are capable of running even the biggest countries in the world," he stated. "However," he continued, "I also meant then that the ministries must not run as

independent entities, but as part of the collective operation of government."

The Prime Minister also took a broadside at the Outlet Newspaper, calling it "disloyal" and condemning it and its writers as "communists". He also dismissed last Saturday's demonstration by the UNDP as merely "Old wine in old bottles".

He said his decision to call the Press Conference at Cabinet, was to give a clear and unequivocal signal to the country and the world that his party and cabinet have surmounted their differences and are now united as one. He promised that with the differences behind them, the party will return its full attention to the important matters of state before it.

The detailed account of the outcome of the retreat came from Party Chairman, Lester Bird, who said the ALP leader-

ship has agreed to put behind it allegations of Palace Coup and reports of political instability.

"The Prime Minister himself, told the retreat that he is well aware that as leader of the ALP and Prime Minister, he enjoys the support of the party membership, government officers, including all his envoys abroad, and all the Ministers of government," he disclosed.

Noting that there is no need to fear about the stability of the country, Party Chairman Bird noted that with the Prime Minister's 30 years experience as a Cabinet Member and with six ministers with 11 years Cabinet experience, these combined years are more than for any other cabinet in the Caribbean. "The combined Cabinet experience of the Antigua and Barbuda economy is reflected in the success of our economy," he emphasised.



Following is a detailed account of the decisions reached at the retreat:

"In closely examining itself over the last three weeks, the Labour Party agreed that there are two matters which deserve early attention. These are:

(1) An improved system of consultation to give the executive of the party and the Antigua Trades and Labour Union, which is our much valued affiliate, a better appreciation of Government decisions. We will take steps to ensure that this is done and I, as Chairman, will confer with the party leader and the President and General Secretary of the Union on the best means to achieve this.

(2) The party has to ensure that a mechanism exists for the orderly transition of the leadership should circumstances make such a transition necessary. It was agreed that by doing so, the party would be acting with prudence and good sense and this should not be construed by anyone as an effort to remove the leader in whom the party, as a whole, reaffirmed their confidence.

In order to do this, a drafting group which devised amendments to the ALP constitution last year will be re-convened to consider this requirement and to submit recommendations for its implementation to the next convention of the party.

The councils of the Labour Party, which debated the operations of the party, are convinced

that these two measures will strengthen the party still further and help it to continue to steer the course of stability and prosperity which has so far marked Antigua and Barbuda's development.

Fifth, the party, through the debates held in two caucuses and a parliamentary retreat, has decided that while the opposition groups have been making much of the airport matter, the government should not be baited into taking any action without the benefit of the results of the investigation now being conducted by Sir Archibald Nedd. The party recognised that some of our own people have been deliberately lured into making statements without having all the facts at their disposal,

while others have been maliciously misrepresented by opposition groups. It has been decided, therefore, that cabinet will await the findings of the investigation before making any further pronouncements on this matter.

Sixth, it was recognised that allegations of corruption from the opposition will not cease. In fact, it is assumed that the opposition parties will intensify their allegations and redouble their attempts to smear the government. In this context, it has been decided, that the government should establish an Oversight Committee, made up of persons of high repute and drawn from the Christian Council, the Trade Union Movement and the

Private Sector. This Oversight Committee shall have the responsibility of examining and making recommendations on projects involving government procurement and government borrowing.

The government will ask the Christian Council, the Trades Union Movement and the Private Sector organisations to nominate their own representatives to the Oversight Committee which shall have the authority to advise the government and satisfy the public whether there is any evidence of wrong doing on projects involving government borrowings and procurement. The Prime Minister has asked me, as Minister of Economic Development, to write to the various organisations to en-

quire about their willingness to serve on the Oversight Committee. Cabinet will be asked to authorise the Legal Department to draw up appropriate terms of reference.

The party firmly believes that, over the last few weeks, the government has been distracted sufficiently from the task of effectively governing this country. We do not intend to be distracted any longer. The retreat on Saturday agreed that all of us will now buckle down seriously to the job of managing the affairs of Antigua and Barbuda and to continuing to deliver the conditions for economic prosperity and social upliftment which this country now enjoys."

The retreat and its conclusion will be welcomed

by those Antiguan and Barbudans who have the interest of the country at heart. The HERALD welcomes the new spirit of unity and vigor emanating from the Press Confer-

ence, as a move which will guarantee the country's economic and social growth.

The ALP holds a big public meeting next Tuesday, 24th February, to report to the nation.

#### Rebuff to Heath, UNDP

St Johns HERALD in English 20 Feb 87 p 4

[Editorial: "Tapestry of a Disaster"]

[Text]

The leader of the New United National Democratic Party Dr. Ivor Heath, must be contemplating his political future in the face of the stern rebuff both himself and his party received last Saturday.

The party was launched almost a year ago with no discernable goals or programme. To compound its problems, there were no "issues" on the political horizon on which it could hope to generate interest. The economy was moving ahead, unemployment was minimal, jobs at the Industrial Park go abegging.

Then there was the composition of the UNDP itself to contend with. Remnants of the PLM turn UPM, who had been rejected by voters in consecutive elections. Dr. Heath, a new-comer to politics, represented a legacy of middle class element at a time when class and social standings were important factors. It is not surprising therefore that the party's formation was met with a luke-warm reception by the public.

When in the latter-quarter of 1986, a French Magazine with a world-wide circulation, first reported that something may have been wrong with the

financing of the rehabilitation of the V.C. Bird International Airport Runway, the UNDP found itself in a position where, at last, it had an "issue", a ready-made one to boot.

As allegations of wrong-doing associated with the project attracted increased attention from the local, regional and international press, and the Government set up an independent investigation to look into these allegations, the UNDP leadership felt that they had gathered enough support to stage a demonstration of mass proportions in St. John's to give it a psychological victory, and the death knell of the ALP. That Dr. Heath was given a false sense of hope by his acolytes is not only a fact, but it also indicates political naivete. "Five hundred will come from Barnes Hill alone," Nat Moses, the radio personality-turn-politician promised. They are still coming.

Perhaps too Dr. Heath has been misled by what he may have read in some publications, notably the Caribbean Contact, which said, "the ALP finds itself being effectively abandoned in favour of the UNDP", but which gave

no survey results or other tangible evidence to support its contention.

The demonstration is now history not more than two hundred and fifty persons took part. It has been termed a disaster by some.

But perhaps more than anything else it shows the UNDP as very inept.

It shows too that while the public wants to know the full story behind the Airport Runway Rehabilitation, the

press has blown the whole issue way out of proportions, and might itself stand in the way of getting to the truth.

While confusion rages among the opposition, the ALP cannot allow itself to become complacent. It has started the process of healing and it must continue along this path in the interest of the party, and the future of the country.

#### Slap at ALP 'Retreat'

St Johns OUTLET in English 20 Feb 87 pp 1, 2

[Text]

The self-destructing ruling ALP, which has been the scene of much "bickering," "blow-up," "in-fighting" with rumours aplenty of palace coups held another meeting last Saturday at Dutchman's Bay, to attempt to paper over the numerous cracks in the party.

This time the event was billed by the convenor, Deputy PM Lester Bird as a "Retreat." A retreat is usually an overnight affair in some secluded area, where besides the group meeting, individuals can confer. However, as is to be expected Lester Bird uses big concepts to define small matters. Nevertheless the so-called ALP retreat essentially involved members of Parliament including ALP Senators and members of the Executive of the Antigua Trades & Labour Union.

One of the curious things not mentioned in the official Release, is how the ALP Retreat ducked the Vere Runway Bird Airport scandal.

After some discussion--there was a ten point so-called plan--put forward by Lester Bird--it was decided that no decision would be taken on the Vere Runway Bird issue, until after Justice Nedd's Investigation is over.

Vere Runway Bird thus becomes the only Minister in Caribbean history who was formally investigated while he still held office. Indeed, months after the scandal broke, he was still occupying the Ministry of Aviation and Public Utilities in full control of the files and documents. It is a clear, deliberate and wanton outrage.

Even in fraudulent Guyana, where Minister Corbin was under investigation for criminal allegations made against him the Minister promptly resigned, until he was formally cleared of any wrong-doing.

In Antigua the \$400 per day Justice Nedd Investigation plus hotel accommodations, stenographers and Secretarial expenses which seems likely to go on for



months, is likely to run up a huge bill reporting on what the Cabinet already knows.

Every Cabinet Minister knew what was in the Documentary Brief presented by their colleague Minister of Education Reuben Harris. There is no other known instance of a Cabinet member, spilling his guts about another Cabinet member in a 45 page closely reasoned document indicting another Cabinet Minister. Irregularities abound.

Another oddity about the ALP so-called Retreat is that the decisions were broken, the moment they were made. It was agreed that the Press (excluding Outlet to be sure) would be invited to the next Cabinet meeting this Wednesday past, and PM V. C. Bird would make a statement to the Press in full presence of Cabinet.

PM V. C. Bird unilaterally changed that and instead, Deputy PM Lester Bird was asked by PM V.C. Bird to make a statement on which he, Prime Minister Bird would comment at the Cabinet meeting with government media present. Deputy PM Bird was reportedly put out by PM Bird's reneging on the agreement at the ALP Retreat but went along with it in the end. Lester Bird's statement was not doubt drafted in England by his alter ego, Ron Sanders.

At the Retreat PM Bird was asked as one of Lester Bird's ten point plan to give up the Information portfolio which he appropriated in the Freeland debacle. PM Bird refused to give up Information, and those who made the proposal retreated.

Prime Minister Bird also agreed to take back and apologise for his statement that his Ministers "are fat now" that "their bellies are full" that "they have neglected their responsibilities to the people" broadcast over Radio and TV.

PM Bird who made a broadcast on Radio and TV carried several times told the Press Conference that he was misinterpreted by Tim Hector. He blamed 'communism' for his statement that his Ministers "bellies are full" they "are fat not" etc.

Interestingly enough on the matter of AT&LU resolution calling for the dismissal of Ron Sanders as Antigua's

High Commissioner because according to the impish General Secretary of the AT&LU, Sanders is "too poor boast", Harris made the case for the defense. He pointed out that Sanders was well respected in UNESCO and in the Commonwealth, and that were it not for him Antigua and Barbuda could not have gained as much from both organisations. Indeed, said Harris, Ron Sanders was Antigua's best diplomat, and that was a fact whether he liked the man or not. Against Sanders said Harris, UN Ambassador Jacobs pales into bungling incompetence.

Then strangely enough, Vere Bird jr agreed that Sanders was Antigua's best diplomat. What worried him, he said was Sanders influence in the Caribbean media. He insinuated that Sanders through other Guyanese journalists was responsible for the several reports in the Caribbean media, about the US\$11 million Airport rip-off.

The so called Retreat was really an exercise where proposals were put to Prime Minister Bird and to see what the Maximum Leader would agree with. He agreed to everything. But all the participants in their various groups were in agreement that PM Bird would agree in principle because the heat was on and then sabotage the same decisions when and if the heat cooled down. One group actually pointed out

that though PM Bird said he had no intention of dismissing Ron Sanders, since he appointed all diplomats, and it was the same Prime Minister Bird who had instructed AT&LU General Secretary and Workers Voice Editor, to orchestrate the campaign against Ron Sanders.

**The ALP so called Retreat was a cosmetic**

exercise in which the make-up ran all over the face no sooner than it was applied, making an ugly mess. Ministerial corruption with their "bellies full" according to PM Bird, and sporting reams of "fat" as a result of neglecting the people's interest and feathering their own bird nests, cannot be resolved with cosmetic Retreats.

#### New Scandal Charges

St Johns OUTLET in English 20 Feb 87 pp 1, 2

[Text]

Vere Runway Bird is at the centre of another financial scam, in the scandal ridden Bird government, involving public funds and another of his multiple companies.

When after the so-called New Year Cabinet re-shuffle, better known as the Freeland fiasco, new Ministers were appointed to the Ministry of Public Utilities and Aviation they came across some startling deals in the Ministry of Public Utilities and Aviation in which they had just taken office.

Minister Yearwood and Minister without portfolio Cochrane, both the new ministers in the Ministry of Aviation are reported to have been stunned by a Company owned by Vere Bird and which was termed a Procurement Company in the Ministry of Public Utilities.

This Company is owned by Minister Vere Bird Jr in league with one Derek Hugh, a white Guyanese who lives in England.

According to the reports emanating from within the Ministry, this Procurement Company acquired without Cabinet or legislative approval, and therefore illegally, some US\$1 million of public funds.

#### Another White Side-kick

With these public funds, the Procurement Company owned by Minister Vere Bird and another of his white side-kicks purchased equipment and parts needed by the Ministry of Public Utilities, where Vere Runway Bird was the Minister. This procurement Company charged the government handsome commissions for procuring the equipment and parts required and approved by the Minister, Vere Runway Bird.

In effect the reports from the alarmed Ministers state, Vere Bird as Minister of Public Utilities was placing an order with himself as owner of the Procure-

ment Company, operating out of England, providing the goods at inflated prices and then himself through his company charging himself as Minister, which commission, as Minister, he approved. Meanwhile, runs the report from within the Ministry, the money used by the private Vere Bird Procurement Company was public funds over which the same Minister had complete charge.

The allegation being made within the Ministry, is that Vere Bird as Minister used US\$1 million and through his white partner, Derek Hugh, in England, they secured equipment and parts, made their own prices, added their own fees and commissions and the government of Antigua and Barbuda paid.

#### Cover-up

This further instance of conflict of interest was reported to the Group of Eight, or what Prime Minister Bird called at the last caucus the Gang of Eight, of which Deputy Prime Minister Lester Bird and Minister of Education

Reuben Harris are joint leaders, but over which "Gang of Eight" Lester Bird presides when they meet.

According to reports from within the Group or Gang of Eight it was decided not to raise this Procurement deal at Cabinet or Party level, because in the words of the reports "it would just add fuel to the fire of the Airport scandal."

The hushing up of this latest financial mystery within the Bird regime, is yet another cover-up. It is not known yet whether the recent device of promising a public Inquiry under the law and then replacing it with an Investigation under no law, will be employed again to "investigate" this latest million dollar deal.

The other recent financial mysteries were revealed, by none other than Minister of Education Reuben Harris, who confidantes to Vere Bird claim "ratted" on him in his 45 page Documentary Brief to the Sir Archibald Nedd Investigation. Sir Archibald Nedd after proclaiming that he had not received "the much talked about" Reuben Harris Documentary Brief, publicly acknowledged receipt of this unprecedented document, in which a Cabinet Minister lays waste another Cabinet Minister in a devastating series of revelations. Both wrong-doer and exposé are still Cabinet Ministers in a badly cracked Cabinet and in which

the cracks are no longer cracks but chasms.

#### GROSS IRREGULARITY

Among the Financial mysteries revealed by Harris is a gross irregularity. Writes Harris at page 30 of his Documentary Brief "When loans for whatever reason are being negotiated and Commissions or Promotion fees are associated with the negotiation, these are usually declared and the quantum [amount] becomes part of the cost of the loan." In the case of the V.C. Bird International airport loan this did not take place.

"However", Harris observes with telling effect "a Director of Building Finishing Systems referred to '7 million francs for feasibility studies' of the Airport". And Harris reminds that 7 million francs are about the equivalent of \$1.2 million U.S. Then Harris seals his indictment with this conclusion "Apart from not seeing the justification for the studies, and the studies themselves, the French public servant and ministries which are involved with the loan are yet to see the documented studies".

In plain terms payment was made by Vere Runway Bird as Minister to a French Company BFS, of which his law firm, Bird and Bird, is the Antigua legal representative, and of which French company (BFS) Vere Runway Bird's Special Advisor,

Patrick de Nedde, is Chairman and director, for feasibility studies on the airport, which were **never produced** and therefore never done. U.S. 1.2 millions dollars was paid on this fraud.

**Added to the** US\$1,840,000 which Harris found was "raked off" on the overlay of the runway this brings the Harris record of rake-offs to US 3 million and 40 thousand dollars **on just two** areas of airport expenditure.

**Harris then questions** the probity of US\$80,000 to one of the plethora of French lawyers in this deal who it is said was retained by the French Bank. Harris claims that the French Bank and not the government of Antigua should have paid these legal fees. Likewise, US\$50,000 allegedly paid for Insurance. Similarly, US\$50,000 "paid to local Engineers" when no local engineers were ever hired or paid.

#### **THE BIG DEALS**

**Then Harris gets** to some bigger extraction of funds from the corrupt beltway properly named the V.C. Bird International Airport.

**Writes Harris at** page 37 of his Documentary Brief that the accounts show that some "U.S. \$62,567.63 are paid out again to the **supervisor**" who was required "to oversee the entire rehabilitation works at the V.C. Bird International Airport."

**However, Harris observed** earlier that the Federal Aviation Authority FAA had pointed out the appointed **Supervisor**, Vere Bird's Company, Maryna, was not present at the site during the overlay, and presented "sketchy reports" gleaned from the contractor. For **doing nothing** Vere Bird's company, as **Supervisor**, supervising itself, got US\$62,567.63.

**Harris using his own word** makes another **'discovery'** that "Maryna Ltd as **Supervisor** **raked** a net amount of US\$670,000 **taxpayers money** for doing absolutely nothing as Engineer. Then as Engineer, the same Vere Bird Company "Maryna

Ltd employed three engineers for the purpose of certifying its own work at a fee of US\$165,000. And Maryna Ltd as engineers will again move away with US\$675,000 for Engineering studies" on the new Taxiway, "which studies" Harris is careful to point out **"have not yet been presented to the Ministry of Public Utilities, but the cost of the studies has been disbursed"**.

#### **THE RAKE-OFFS**

**So then we have** US 1 million 840 thousand on runway overlay; US\$50,000 raked off for local engineers but never paid to any such engineers; another US\$50,000 for Insurance; a further US\$80,000 to a French lawyer Jose Russell, then US\$62, 567.63; then US\$670,000 paid to Maryna as **Supervisor**; then US\$670,000 paid to the same Maryna Ltd as **Engineers**, plus US\$165,000 for French Engineers to certify the certifiers Maryna then a further US\$675,000 paid to the same Maryna Ltd, - Minister Vere Bird's company it will be remembered - for non-existent engineering studies, plus US\$1.2 million paid to BFS as undeclared Commission, plus a further US\$500,000 paid to de Nedde as another undeclared commission.

**At the end of it all Harris accounts for 5 MILLION, 952 THOUSAND, 567 DOLLARS and 63 CENTS U.S. in direct cash rake-off from the airport deal. Plus Harris provides evidence of other missing equipment.**

**It is impossible to see** how in the face of the clear evidence at Cabinet's disposal, and which Harris made use of, the Bird Government could still keep Vere Bird in office while he is being investigated for what Cabinet already knows. Sixes are more than nines now.



Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 2 Mar 87 p 4

[Text]

**NEW YORK, March 1, CANA**

Opposition party leader Dr. Ivor Heath has warned Antigua's cabinet ministers that if they misused their positions to enrich themselves they may end up in jail, should the government change hands.

Heath, leader of the National Democratic Party, said that should his party win the government in the next election it would set up machinery to look into the dealings of the Vere Bird Administration, and if any wrongdoing was uncovered, the guilty ministers could end up behind bars.

"We think that all ministers must be held accountable and when the Antigua Labour Party Government leaves office the ministers must answer for what went on," he remarked.

"If they have done no wrong, fair enough. But if we find that there are instances in which laws have been broken, then they should be dealt with under the full force of the law."

Asked if that meant sending some of them to jail, the gynaecologist said "yes." The NDP leader made his comments while on a five day visit to the city at the head of a four-man delegation to meet with Antiguan living here.

In carrying out a probe, Heath said, the opposition party would be merely following the precedent set by the current regime which set up a commission of inquiry when it took over in 1976.

The results of that inquiry played a key role in former Antigua Premier, George Walters, being sent to prison.

Complaining that his country

had become a "haven for swindlers," and foreigners with questionable backgrounds, Heath said that the laxity, corruption and mismanagement that had become the normal way of doing business in the government had now spread to other areas of the society.

As an example of the questionable dealings of the Government, the opposition spokesman cited the airport resurfacing project which was financed by an 11 million U.S. dollar loan but which, according to the World Bank, should not have cost any more than 700,000 U.S. dollars.

He promised that ministers in any government he headed would be subject to periodic scrutiny to ensure that they too were held accountable.

Accompanying Heath to New York were Baldwin Spencer, the NDP's Deputy leader Rolster Potter, and Ralph Francis. They are to return home tomorrow.

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CSO: 3298/158

# SOME MINISTERS CRITICAL AS GOVERNMENT PAPER RESURFACES

## Reemergence of NATION's VOICE

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 24 Feb 87 p 13

[Text]

**St. John's, Antigua, Feb. 18, Cana:**

THE Antigua and Barbuda government today resumed publication of its tabloid-size newspaper, under a new name **The Nation** after an eight-month absence on news stands around the country.

The paper, formerly known as **The Nation's Voice**, was published by the Public Information Department of the Ministry of Information and is edited by George Joseph, who returned to the position after completing an assignment with the United States Embassy in St John's.

In today's editorial, the paper said the name change was effected "in order to more correctly portray our role as a newspaper", and promised to report on social, religious and political issues affecting the country.

Following is the text of the editorial:

"We are back on the scene after a considerable absence.

"During that period we underwent a name change in order to more correctly portray our role as a newspaper.

"A quick analysis of our contemporaries in the nation of Antigua and Barbuda will reveal beyond reasonable doubt that their idea of a newspaper is that it is a vehicle through which political ideology of one kind or another must be fed the populace by politicians and other political aspirants.

"We believe that news is created throughout the length and breadth of our twin-island state — not only

in St. John's; and newspapers should report such news as they happen, be the news social, religious, political or otherwise.

"short, we believe that the public should be correctly and properly informed.

"For this reason we dedicate our columns to our readers. Not for libel or political slur, but for good, honest reporting and constructive criticism whenever the need arises.

"A true newspaper, we see ourselves as builders and moulders of our nation working together with you our readers.

"Each Endeavouring, All Achieving".

At a meeting called last week by the acting General Manager of the state-owned ABS Radio and Television, Hollis Henry, with representatives of the Public Information Department, Joseph said Prime Minister Vere Bird had requested a resumption of the paper to "project the Government's image a little more in the eyes of the public".

Joseph said the Government had also promised to make public details of two independent reports by the International Civil Aviation Organisation, (ICAO) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on the controversial U.S\$ 11.1 million airport runway resurfacing project here.

Only the ICAO report was published in today's edition.

Joseph also sought the support of ABS Radio and Television reporters to make the paper a success in "promoting Government's policies and programmes".

## Criticism From Cabinet

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 24 Feb 87 p 13

[Text]

St. John's, Antigua, Feb. 20, Cana: MORE than half of Antigua and Barbuda's 15-member cabinet have issued a statement here disassociating themselves from Government's new "**Nation**" newspaper, which appeared Wednesday with articles attacking members of the Administration, the Barbados-based Caribbean News Agency (CANA) and several regional personages, mostly of Indian descent.

The Ministers, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Lester Bird, were concerned that the attacks should follow less than a week after a retreat of the ruling Antigua Labour Party (ALP) and its industrial arm had agreed on fresh measures to guarantee unity.

The paper is published by the Public Information Department of the Ministry of Information, headed by Prime Minister V.C. Bird Sr. But the statement by the Ministers said the Prime Minister was unaware of the contents of the publication.

Following is the text of the statement:

"We the undermentioned Ministers wish the public, both inside and outside of Antigua and Barbuda, to know that we entirely disassociate ourselves from a publication entitled "**The Nation**" which was

distributed in Antigua on Wednesday. We wish it to be widely known that we had no prior knowledge of its publication or its contents.

"We deeply regret that despite an agreement, reached last Saturday by the Parliamentary Group of the Antigua Labour Party and the Executive of the Antigua Trades and Labour Union, on measures to guarantee the unity of the Party, this publication has so viciously attacked some Ministers of the Government.

"We know that the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. V.C. Bird Sr., was not made aware of the contents of the publication and this gives us cause for even greater concern, for it indicates that there are persons within the Government machinery who consider themselves above the authority of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the Executive of the Party and Union.

"We wish also to separate ourselves completely from the vile attacks on several prominent Caribbean personalities contained in a leading article in the publication. Those attacks were not only shamefully racist, they were also blatantly false.

"We also wish it to be known that we strongly condemn the unfounded attack on the Caribbean News Agency (CANA) as an 'anti-democratic, anti-West, pro-Soviet organisation which is destabilizing the Caribbean'.

"We urge the people of Antigua and Barbuda to treat this disgraceful publication with the full and utter disdain which it deserves.

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CSO: 3298/158



# SHORTAGE OF WORKERS THREATENS 1987 SUGAR HARVESTING

Bridgetown DAILY NATION in English 27 Jan 87 p 1

[Article by Hartley Henry]

[Text]

**THIS YEAR'S SUGAR CROP** needs an additional 1 620 workers, almost double the amount required last year.

And, with just five days to go before grinding officially begins, some plantation owners are worried they may not attract the required number to get their harvests going.

Some noted yesterday that despite reduced acreage and increased mechanisation, the industry still required a significant amount of manual labour, which was not a healthy situation at a time when the industry's viability was in doubt.

The local sugar industry rely upon an estimated 6 000 to harvest its crop.

A random survey showed the demand did not stem so much from any increase in the number of jobs available, but more from a falling off in the number of full-time and registered workers.

Many of the plantation owners attributed this reduction to the building boom, where skilled workers, who up to last year worked in the crop, have been finding more attractive jobs in construction.

Statistics from the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited show that of the 1 620 jobs available, 1 298 are for cane cutters. The industry also needs 118 retrievers, 86 loaders, 55 scrapers, 45 packers, ten tractor drivers, two lorry drivers and six loader operators.

An advertisement, detailing the categories of workers needed and the estates on which they are required, will appear in tomorrow's edition of the DAILY NATION.

At the start of the crop last year the industry needed 996 additional workers.

Industry officials said yesterday there was the usual reluctance on the part of some workers to register, but while they anticipated an increase in applicants as the February 2 starting date draws nearer, it was doubtful whether all the jobs would be filled at any period during the expected 14-week crop.

Meanwhile, BSIL executives have refused to comment on weekend reports which quoted chairman of the Barbados National Bank (BNB) Wendell McClean as saying industry owners were being given until May to prove their credit worthiness or face harsh measures from the bank.

[Subsequent to the above report, advertisements by the BSIL appeared in both major papers (DAILY NATION and BARBADOS ADVOCATE) listing job requirements by type of worker and plantation for the entire country.]

# IDB, OTHER DONORS TO HELP FINANCE VARIETY OF PROJECTS

## Increase From IDB

Bridgetown BARBADOS ADVOCATE in English 27 Jan 87 p 1

[Text]

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has reported a 74 per cent increase in the disbursement of loans last year for projects in Barbados. The Bank reported that some US\$11.7 million (Bds\$23.4 million) had been made available to Barbados.

Disbursements were mainly in the areas of health, highway construction and agriculture, export financing, and education.

Some Bds\$7.4 million was made available for the financing of the Airport to West Coast Access Highway; Bds\$2.8 million for the soil conservation project in the Scotland District; Bds\$4.2 million for the expansion of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the construction of the Glebe Polyclinic; and Bds\$3.6 for the Bridgetown Fisheries Project.

Export financing through the Central Bank of Barbados and commercial banks received over Bds\$2 million.

IDB representative, Mr. Daniel Robinson, has praised Barbados for making available the counterpart funds so as to maintain projects once they had started.

"Credit must go to the Government of Barbados for making sure to provide the necessary counterpart funds to allow projects, once started, to maintain their momentum and be completed on time," he said.

There was also a 500 per cent increase in IDB disbursements to the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) for on-lending to its members in the Caribbean (mainly for projects in the small Eastern Caribbean islands which are not members of the IDB).

## Haynes on Other Commitments

Bridgetown DAILY NATION in English 29 Jan 87 p 1

[Article by Tony Best]

[Text] Barbados has secured commitments from a number of donor agencies to help finance the country's \$150 million capital programme for the next two years.

The commitments were made to Minister of Finance Dr. Ritchie Haynes at the current meeting of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation and Development now being held at the World Bank in Washington.

"The commitments given to Barbados will cover a whole range of capital projects of Government in 1987-88 and in 1988-89," said one highly placed source. "The commitments will be sufficient to accommodate a capital programme of over \$150 million."

Haynes made a presentation to the experts and representatives of the various agencies against a background of a World Bank report which described Government's economic strategy as "essential if economy was to return to the pattern of growth of a decade ago."

"The new Government of Barbados, selected in May 1986, re-affirmed a commitment to an economic strategy based on export-led growth and a greater role for the private sector with the public sector playing a supportive role," the World Bank stated.

"This strategy is essential considering the poor performance over the past five years, in mark contrast to its performance during the previous decade."

In his address which was described by some of the experts and officials of the donor agencies as being "extremely good", Haynes, who was attending his first Caribbean Group meeting since becoming Minister of Finance, said although the performance of the economy in 1987 would depend on the recovery in the major industrial countries, particularly the United States, the real growth of five per cent recorded last year was unlikely to be realised this year.

"Apart from tourism which has started strongly," he said, "the export-oriented sectors are not expected to expand in 1987, while some real growth will be generated by rising domestic demand in the construction and distribution sectors."

He projected that domestic oil production would rise by 15 per cent and promised Government would carefully control public sector finances.

"There will be little or no growth in the other sectors of the economy," Haynes explained.

Government, he went on, expected winter tourism to expand by about five or six per cent and such growth would be supported by "new initiatives" to boost travel to Barbados during the summer months.

Manufacturing output, the minister said, was expected to decline about five per cent because of last year's plant closings, while exports "are expected to be weak" because of trade restrictions in CARICOM and the problem with electronic exports.

However, he suggested, the strength of the country's fiscal position this year would depend on Government's ability to keep down both its capital and current expenditure.

Turning to capital programme for the next two years, Haynes said a "pipeline" of ongoing projects this year would include an agricultural diversification scheme which the World Bank was expected to finance; a second education development scheme financed by the World bank and the Inter-American development Bank; and housing construction to be undertaken with assistance from the Venezuelan Investment Fund.

Government, he pointed out, was also planning to begin construction of a natural gas pipeline and liquified petroleum gas plant.

# AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN TO BE REVISED, UPDATED

Bridgetown BARBADOS ADVOCATE in English 29 Jan 87 p 1

[Text]

Barbados' agriculture sector will soon have a new two-year development plan beginning this year.

This was stated by Minister of Agriculture, Mr Warwick Franklyn, who said that the new plan would seek to broaden Barbados agricultural diversification programme as well as ensure that small farmers widen their economic base.

Mr. Franklyn said the new plan was being studied by the Economic Planning Unit within the Ministry of Finance and Planning. He noted that the old agricultural plan under the Barbados Labour Party Administration was somewhat outdated and needed refining.

The Minister said he felt that with the new agricultural plan Barbados' new agri-industrial programme

would take off. However, he stressed the importance of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) in the planning of such a move.

## \$98m plan

The agriculture plan of the former BLP Government for the period 1983-88 was expected to cost \$98.5 million. The proposed plan is expected to cost in the region of \$28.4 million over the next two years.

In the BLP development plan, attention was paid to the rehabilitation

of the sugar industry so that it could service "its guaranteed export and local markets" as well as to take advantages of spot demand as price conditions warranted.

The BLP plan also sought to take steps to develop the non-sugar agricultural sector, including the modernisation of the fishing industry, the development of Scotland District for fruit production, a poultry hatchery, expansion of the black belly sheep programme and the improvement of marketing apparatus."

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CSO: 3298/159

PUBLIC WORKERS UNION CHIEF TARGET OF CENSURE MOTION

Bridgetown DAILY NATION in English 27 Jan 87 p 24

[Text]

THE National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) will file a censure motion today against its general secretary, Joseph Goddard.

Sources close to the union told the NATION yesterday that the motion cited "dereliction of duty" as one of the reasons behind the move by its executive.

NUPW president Nigel Harper avoided commenting on the motion, but sources said the charge of "dereliction of duty" stemmed from Goddard's non-participation in the union's week of activities earlier this month.

The secretary general reportedly attended none of the events staged during the public workers' week of activities which ended on January 12.

But the main bone of contention seems to be Goddard's disapproval over the level of pay increases agreed to by the NUPW and the Barbados Union of Teachers.

The two unions last week accepted Government's pay increase offers of 1.4 percent for workers at the top, 4.3 percent for workers in the middle and a nine percent for the lowest paid public workers — a similar percentage increase as that agreed to by the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU) last October.

It is understood that Goddard was the only executive member to object to last week's pay settlement, and was also one of three dissenting members at a meeting of the NUPW executive last Tuesday.

Reports state that the censure motion also arose at the committee meeting that day.

Goddard reportedly objected to these pay increases, contending they were unsatisfactory.

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CSO: 3298/159



PAPER SPECULATES ON TRANSSHIPMENT OF CONTRA ARMS

Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 15 Feb 87 pp 1, 12

[Text]

That is the question that is still unanswered.

THE BELIZE TIMES learns from reliable sources that Belize was indeed used as a base for transshipment of arms to the Contras since last year. (See BELIZE TIMES MAY 4, 1986) Whether this is continuing is still not clear.

In November last year when the question was put to the Prime Minister in a House of Representatives meeting by the Parliamentary leader, Florencio Marin, the Prime Minister was lost for words and failed to give a straight and convincing answer. Now the issue has surfaced again.

The reputed Muslim Journal of Chicago in its December 22, 1986 issue in a front page article states that former COMPOL Maxwell Samuels was "prematurely" retired for helping the Reagan Administration get arms to the contra rebels seeking to overthrow the Government of Nicaragua.

The article further states that both the U.S. State Department and the Belize police

officials deny that Samuels was part of a contra supply network.

The MUSLIM JOURNAL however quotes one authoritative source close to the Belizean government saying:

**"It is a fact that Belize was used as a transshipment point, and that it was done with the former Commissioner's assistance. This is not speculation," the source said. "Why else would he be asked to retire at**

such an early age with out explanation? Mr. Samuels is 47 years old.

"While there may be elements in the Cabinet who would not mind facilitating the Reagan Administration in its secret war with Nicaragua, the majority would be against that.

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CSO: 3298/160

POLICE CHIEF DENIES REPORTS OF GUERRILLAS IN NORTH

'Mafioso'-Type Organization

Belize City THE BEACON in English 14 Feb 87 pp 1, 7

[Text]

ORANGE Walk Town and surrounding villages have gone relatively quiet. But there still remains a whole lot of mafioso style nervous vibrations emitting from this area of the country, which has been infested by drug peddling and violent crime.

In the midst of this unstable quiet, there has surfaced a story of the existence of a mafia-guerrilla organisation calling themselves "La Mano Negra" (The Black Hand).

According to our Orange Walk source, La Mano Negra has been described as "sophisticated," and has so far limited its campaign to issuing threatening messages to well-known citizens, mostly on cassette tapes. But there appears to be some difficulty in determining whether the group has any drug-related connections. That theory has been completely discounted by our

source, which points to the fact that a number of suspected drug barons have themselves been recipients of the threatening tapes

A Police Headquarters source in Belmopan could give no opinion on the existence of The Black Hand, except to confess that the authorities have also been aware of the "rumours" and are investigating.

But it is known that there is a guerrilla organisation in Guatemala who go by the same name, and it is generally believed that this could very well be a fragmentation of the Guatemalan group.

Police have not linked La Mano Negra to either the drug trade or to the series of January kidnappings. So what is the motive for existence of the organisation?

It is recalled that in the 1960s, Police also

had cause to investigate an earlier Guatemalan guerrilla splinter group existing in Belize. That group was primarily concerned with trafficking in guns and ammunition.

That group eventually disappeared. But because of the horde of illegal aliens that were let into

Belize by the PUP administration, an organisation such as La Mano Negra may be vastly more extensive than at first believed - and Belize's modest law enforcement capability may just be too small to smash La Mano Negra out of existence this time!

#### Guatemalan Links

Belize City THE REPORTER in English 15 Feb 87 pp 1, 14

[Text]. Two men may have been killed in the exchange of fire between the Tactical Service Unit of the Police Force and a group of Salvadoran kidnappers in the Caraban area of Progreso on the night of January 18, even though no corpses have been found and no one has reported missing persons.

In the shooting exchange between the outlaws and the Tactical Unit one police officer, Pvt Leslie Flowers was shot and injured in the leg, but there was no evidence of any outlaw casualties.

Late reports coming in from Progreso however say that there were in fact many casualties, and that two of the "guerrilleros" were killed by police firepower.

"The guerrillas took away the two men and buried them" one villager who did not want to be identified said. Others in the village of Progreso.

The guerrillas appear to have entrenched themselves in and around the Progreso area. They were acting under instructions to capture businessmen and hold them for ransom.

Mr Escalante has told the Reporter that while he was a prisoner for three days with his captors he frequently spoke with them. He said he was kept in a damp shaft with sheer walls measuring about six feet by six feet.

His captors, he said, put tree branches over the shaft as a roof and lay rocks on top of the roof. Covered in this way the shaft became very dark and stuffy, and he asked several times to be let out for a breath of fresh air.

Relating his experience with his captors Eloy Escalante said they told him that they were guerrilla fighters and that they were acting under instructions of a leader. They wouldn't say who their leader was, or whether this leader resided in Orange Walk, but they did make it clear that they were operating under specific instructions.

One of the kidnappers, Mr Escalante said, was a man who had obviously had some medical training. It was he who administered two

injections, one in each arm after he (the prisoner) had been shot in the left hand by one of his captors wielding a revolver.

The bullet entered through the palm of the hand and came out between the third and fourth fingers at the back of the left hand. It became very painful, Escalante said and two severed tendons were sticking out. One of the kidnappers used a pair of scissors to cut off the damaged tendons and dressed the wound, he said.

Other reports from Orange Walk speak of other atrocities committed by aliens. Farmers and milperos report that their crops and farm animals are not safe anymore. Some aliens report that guerrillas often order them off the land.

Usually the outlaw aliens prey on other aliens who accept the harsh treatment without making a fuss.

Now that the Police have made a determined stand, things are much better in the villages of Orange Walk, but there are still dangerous aliens around - some of them with valid registration papers.

The new evidence that guerrillas fighters from El Salvador have now infiltrated Belize and are hanging out in the rural areas of Orange Walk can only mean that the communists have established a guerrilla headquarters in Orange Walk and are using these headquarters to raise money through illegal means to support their revolution in El Salvador.

#### Salvadoran Communist Links

Belize City THE REPORTER in English 15 Feb 87 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text]

A mounting body of evidence collected in Orange Walk and elsewhere suggests that there is a well organized, well directed communist - controlled organization operating in Belize with the aim of raising money through terrorist action to support the communist inspired rebellion in El Salvador.

For years now this newspaper has been hearing about shadowy men who move about the central bushlands of Cayo, Stann Creek and Orange Walk who are law unto themselves. Huntsmen and other bushmen know the stories of others who have disappeared after meeting up with strangers in the bush.

More recently, the reports have been coming in of more overt action. Gunmen with precise information hold up a bank, lock up the staff in a room and make off with more than half a million dollars. On another occasion an armed group sits in ambush of the BSI payroll, and fail to take it only because of a very resourceful driver who risked his life to save it. Other attacks against people who are believed to be well off, including acts of kidnappings and ransom-taking show not only a consuming need for money, but also a certain amount of sinister resolve, bred from training and discipline.

It has always been a source of wonderment how it was that marijuana production could develop with such astonishing speed all over the country. Hidden airstrips and underground bunkers require a lot of resources. Communications too have to be of a good quality. These have been put in place as part of the infrastructure of the drug trade.

But recently we have had more to go on. On several different occasions the criminals have volunteered the information they are "guerrelleros" the Spanish word for guerilla fighters.

This by itself would not mean much. Alien outlaws claiming to be guerilla fighters might be masquerading to suit their own fancy. To take this claim seriously one has to look at the modus operandi of the outlaws. Are they petty crooks who are bluffing, or are they people to be taken seriously?

Closer examination of some of the successful moves show that the aliens are resourceful, well informed, disciplined and ruthless.

The kidnapping of Mr. Eloy Escalante three weeks ago and his imprisonment for three days in the abandoned shaft of a cave produced some new data. It became clear from the conduct and conversation of the outlaws they were a disciplined bunch operating under instructions. They freely admitted that they were guerilla fighters, responsible to a "jefe" or

boss.

Given the facts that they were all Salvadorans, and that the guerilla fighters in El Salvador are communist insurgents, one is obliged to face the question: are these outlaw strangers roaming the bush in our country communist guerillas?

The presence of communist guerillas in Belize could explain a lot of things. It could explain the phenomenal growth of the marijuana and cocaine traffic and the manpower which must be used to organize the moves. It could explain the discipline and the dedication of the outlaws. It could shed some light on how the aliens pick their targets and the degree of planning that goes into making one of these strikes.

The evidence is not conclusive at this time, but a pattern has begun to emerge. If these impressions are true, Belize has great and urgent need of an intelligence-gathering network which will alert her to new dangers.

Maybe this is why the government has moved to form the newly created Security Information Service, and why the politicians of the left have been so quick to condemn it.

The words of the Prime Minister at his last press conference seem less strange in this new context. Belize, he said, is being threatened by forces outside its borders as well as by forces within and by people passing through.

#### Police Chief's Comment

PA181503 Paris AFP in Spanish 0115 GMT 18 Feb 87

[Text] Belmopan, 17 Feb (AFP)--Belizean police have no evidence of any guerilla force operating in its territory and no reason to believe such a thing, Police Chief Bernard Bevans told AFP here today, thus denying press reports to that effect.

Bevans was referring to two articles in the weeklies THE BEACON and THE REPORTER on 14 and 15 February, which reported on their front pages the presence and activity of guerilla groups in the northern province of Orange Walk.

THE BEACON reported on the emergence of a guerilla group called "Black Hand," suggesting that it is a dissident group of a Guatemalan guerilla organization.



Meanwhile, THE REPORTER said that the guerrillas are Salvadoran, indicating that "the communists established their guerrilla general headquarters to obtain money illegally to finance their revolution in El Salvador."

However, the chief of police flatly denied these statements, noting that the newspapers did not consult the police to verify the information they published.

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CSO: 3298/160

# COMMENT ON GUATEMALAN CLAIM, PROSPECTS FOR TALKS

## Foreign Minister's Remarks

Belize City AMANDALA in English 6 Feb 87 p 5

[Text]

BELMOPAN, Jan. 25, CANA

Belize is prepared to resume discussions on a long-standing Guatemalan claim to the Central American state whenever its neighbour is ready, according to Foreign Minister Dean Barrow.

He made the comment after Guatemala announced resumption of diplomatic relations with Britain it had broken off when Whitehall gave Belize political independence.

The Foreign Minister said the Belize Government was anxious to resume negotiations with Guatemala "as soon as we receive any indication that they are prepared to start-up these negotiations."

Guatemalan officials, however, say there is no indication of when the two sides will meet.

Commenting on press reports from Guatemala that talks will be resumed this month, a foreign office official said that "we have heard absolutely nothing from Guatemala. The ball is in their court."

The British High Commissioner to Belize, John Crosby, has said that the recent normalization of diplomatic relations between Britain and Guatemala "does not mean that Britain will take a more active role with Guatemala in negotiations over Belize."

Crosby said that while the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Britain and Guatemala "will obviously facilitate contact between Belize and Guatemala, Britain will be very careful not to get involved in direct talks with Guatemala over Belize."

He described the renewal of relations with Guatemala as a step towards the eventual settlement of the dispute - "an encouraging step."

He said the main ingredients for a settlement to the dispute are provisions for a maritime corridor for Guatemala to the Caribbean sea, joint economic agreements, freedom of access through Belize's ports and improved roads on both sides of the Belize/Guatemala border.

-from Jamaica's DAILY GLEANER of Mon. Jan. 26-

## Examination of Demands

Belize City AMANDALA in English 6 Feb 87 p 2

[Letter to the Editor from Alejandro Vernon]

[Text]

No. 5 North St.  
Punta Gorda, Belize.

Dear Editor,

According to a section in an article in the REPORTER, "Diplomatic sources in Guatemala say the talks are likely to lead to Guatemala relinquishing its territorial claim in return for access to the Caribbean Sea through Belize and rights over some territorial waters that Belize now claims."

Other articles in the REPORTER here lately tend to insinuate that Guatemala is giving up its claim and is ready to recognize Belize's Independence. We are happy to know this.

But if we should analyze the above statement, we can see that the condition attached to dropping the claim is essentially the same as the conditions set forth in more detail in the Heads of Agreement of 1981. The central theme of the H.O.A. was FREE transit from Peten through Belize to free ports at Belize City and Punta Gorda; and rights over the waters at Amatique Bay which includes the Sapodilla Cayes.

Diplomats may want to phrase Guatemala's request in a way so as to minimize the CLAIM to soften Belize's stand on this matter, but once legal advisers spell out the proposals in black and white, even President Vinicio Cerezo will not accept anything less than a RIGHT-OF-WAY from El Peten through Belize to the sea. Guatemala's need for the "access to the Caribbean" has been strengthened after Belize became a signatory to the Law of the Sea Accord (see the TOLEDO STAR Editorial of May 22nd 1983.) (Also see Page-4 of the TOLEDO STAR of Dec. 29th 1985).

In fact, ever since Guatemala's Foreign Minister Dr. Molina Orantes and Britain's Ted Rowland conversed in Guatemala eight years ago, Guatemala's claim has been whittled down to the simple need of re-drawing borders at the southern tip of Belize so that territorial waters would not overlap and cause unnecessary conflict between Belize and Guatemala in years to come. Last month, the Editorial of Guatemala's GRAFICO newspaper dated Nov. 19th 1986 said: "....if Belize, which Mr. President is recognizing as a nation, should apply her rights over the 200 marine miles, our country would remain without a natural outlet to the sea and the Atlantic, which means the closure of our markets and traditional marine routes."

In January of 1983, when Lic. Mario Quinones Amezcuita was Guatemala's Ambassador to the United Nations, and talks were held between Guatemalan, British and Belizean representatives, Mr. Said Musa, the PUP Government representative, flatly rejected Guatemala's request for an access to the Caribbean. Mr. Quinones Amezcuita told the press: "The Belizean Government rejected Guatemala's proposal for a border adjustment. Belize offered absolutely nothing."

Lic. Mario Quinones is now the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, and Guatemala is once more requesting "access to the Caribbean Sea through Belize".

However, the other side bearing tremendous influence in this Dispute is the United States' concern with communism making inroads in Central America, and the dual role the British soldiers are playing by defending Belize and discouraging any radically-left Belizean Party

from converting Belize into a satellite of communist Russia. If the big powers (USA and UK) feel that a solution to the Guatemalan Claim will negate the continuity of British soldiers in Belize, I cannot see any solution coming about, unless Belize is ready to offer the United States a military base in Belize, or allows the British soldiers to use Belize as a permanent training grounds, after the Guatemalan Claim is settled.

(Signed) Alejandro Vernon

(Ed. NOTE: Mr. Vernon's views are his own, and not those of this newspaper. Mr. Vernon is known to be a pro-Guatemalan politician. The letter is published because we believe it provides our readers with a view of the type of positions Belizean negotiators meet when they face their Guatemalan counterparts.)

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CSO: 3298/160

# DRIVE AGAINST ILLEGAL ALIENS DRAWS CRITICISM, COMPLAINTS

## Charge of Uncivilized Treatment

Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 8 Feb 87 p 5

[Text]

The timing could not have been worse. Security forces, armed with automatic weapons, swooping down on "undocumented" aliens. With talks between Belize and Guatemala either already started or about to begin the treatment of these aliens is bound to be part of the agenda.

The role of the British Forces in the whole operation will also arise. Prior to this involvement in a purely domestic operation the British role was defined as defensive against an external attack. Now it seems that the British role is to help the government in any perceived threat to the government's existence.

What is more there has been some reported excesses committed by the security forces engaged in the operation and the British will have to explain their role again. In the manhunt for the killer of the nephew of a Minister of the present government many excesses went unreported. It is now learnt that some women were raped, men were brutalized in the third degree "interrogation" which followed.

There is a civilized way to treat aliens. The guilty must be sought and punished after a trial. The innocent have the same rights as citizens of our country.

In addition this country has an agreement with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. All aliens who flee from neighbouring countries because of civil war or political persecution are to be protected under that agreement. Aliens in flight can only reach Belize illegally and undocumented. That is why they are called refugees.

Are our democratic values and our sense of justice being lost?



## Legislative 'Excesses'

Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 8 Feb 87 pp 6, 7

[Unattributed column "An Eye for an Eye"]

[Text] The Prime Minister has gone to great lengths to assure the nation that his government will make immediate and effective response to the crime wave in the North of the country which he blames almost exclusively on aliens. He plans major legislative measures to curb new crimes with harsh penalties and to increase penalties for existing crimes.

The rush to legislation always creates a splash in the water; it appears to show a resolve to correct the imbalance between criminals and the society; and is often seen as a triumph of good over evil. Yet, the experience of civilized society shows clearly that excessive punishment seldom acts as an effective deterrent where the stakes are high. It is often more productive to cure the causes of crime than to attempt to prevent it by fear of brutal punishment. As fashionable therefore, as it may be to blame the criminal fever in the North on the alien population, that is to live in a fools paradise for the real menace is twofold.

So long as there is tremendous profits to be made from the drug trade and so long as the economy remains depressed in the North, even the exacting of the death penalty is a pale and paltry response to the tantalizing temptation of great wealth. High penalties have been known to increase the stakes which, in turn, have inspired greater excitement and incentive. This spiral has led, in less cautious societies, to provoke legislation of measures so inappropriate that the cure becomes more painful than the disease.

We do not seem to have escaped these excesses. This newspaper learns, from a credible source, that thought is being given in Belmopan to legal devices which would permit arms of government, no doubt including SIS, to arbitrarily select citizens who would be called in to explain the sources of their buying power and to explain how they were able to acquire certain items of property. Failure to give satisfactory explanations would result in the forfeiture of that property as a means of depriving the criminal of his ill-gotten gains and thereby removing the incentive for crookedness.

Such a plan, if it turns out to be only half true, inflicts upon a society a curse from which it could never emerge unscathed. It eats away at the very root of our legal heritage by dismantling the presumption of innocence and surplanting it with the presumption of guilt, calling upon the citizen to prove his innocence. This is repugnant to our concept of fairplay and inconsistent with the freedoms promised by our constitution to every citizen.

The discretion to pounce upon anyone and the liberty to accept or reject proof, invite abuse and court disaster of proportions never before experienced.

The Prime Minister also promises to add to his plethora of legislation new and more sophisticated equipment to arm his law enforcement

agencies, a threat, which when expressed suspiciously sounded like he did not have in mind the Belize Police Force. He left us all wondering if SIS was to become the recipient of the most modern listening and surveillance equipment and whether we would ever again be free to pursue our lives unmolested?

This is an unending game, it is a dangerous game, for it means that the better you are the pursuer, the better the pursued will arm. It is a sign of weakness and a symbol of capitulation to allow the criminal to romp confidently free of detection. But once we embark officially upon the process of armaments we jump from the frying pan into the fire of escalation as the super powers have done in the military field.

The Prime Minister also punctuated his determination to act quickly, by informing us how solicitous his forces had been by dragging in herds of evil aliens and deporting them. He had embraced a new style to keep them from returning. He had handed them over to the authorities in their own country. What he failed to explain, was the value of this remarkable innovation, for while these aliens may have been guilty of immigration offences in Belize, this surely was not an offence in their homeland. It was not long, before we learnt of the treatment meted out to these refugees, the condition in which they were returned to their homes and how this meant instant reprisals against our citizens over in Guatemala.

The migration of people across our borders into Belize is a serious problem for our economy, for our social stability, and for our institutions to tackle. It is a problem which Honduras faces, which Mexico tries to solve and which the USA confronts everyday. Much money, effort and time is expended in its solution. Yet, no country has been more successful than the other in coping with or solving the many inherent difficulties. Somehow however, our country won, in the eyes of the world and particularly in the eyes of the United Nations Commission for Refugees, an unequaled reputation for the way we conducted ourselves on this issue, so much so, that funds seemed to flow relatively freely to assist us in accommodating the refugees.

It is easy to lose that reputation and its loss will bring no advantage. Similarly, it has been well proven that thrusting aliens across the border when their new homes are in Belize, will be answered by their speedy return to recover the assets they left behind and invariably, to settle elsewhere in the country in the hope of escaping detection. The only real hope is to devise programs to settle them quickly into the mainstream of Belizean life and to take all possible measures to help them to acquire our values and lifestyle so that they no longer need to prey upon our society to live. As harshly as they may affect our demography, experience has proved how futile other attempted solutions have proven.

The quick response promised by our Prime Minister, could well stumble into the pitfalls of haste and rashness. We could pass laws which fail to petrify the criminals but which distort our society. We could embark upon a domestic arms race which strip us of our own freedom. We could foolishly discard our reputation for human understanding of the plight of the refugee yet have to live with them condemned as outcasts. And in our anxiety to show how dynamic we act in Belize we could pluck out our own eyes instead of that of the culprit.

## Claims of Police, BDF Brutality

FL172153 Bridgetown CANA in English 2102 GMT 17 Feb 87

[Text] Belmopan, 17 Feb (CANA)--Allegations of police-army brutality have surfaced here following last month's round-up of 117 illegal immigrants.

Two Salvadorans with legal refuge status, but not carrying their documents at the time, were among those detained by the police-defence force units.

Forty-nine-year-old Salvadorean farmer Jose Sotero Hernandez said he was punched, trampled, kicked, and forced to stand spread-eagle for hours against a concrete wall at a police station.

And 68-year-old Deonicio Reyes, another Salvadoran, said he was forced to lie down on his back in the police courtyard. He claimed armed soldiers walked over the detainees, hitting them with their rifles.

The illegal immigrants rounded up late last month were all deported.

## Alien Links to Drug Trade

Belize City THE REPORTER in English 15 Feb 87 p 4

[Text]

Belmopan, Belize, Feb. 10:  
Belize's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Curl Thompson, has said that the security forces of Belize will continue operations "all over the country to round up and deport the remaining known 8,000 illegal aliens, mainly Salvadorans and Guatemalans still in the country."

"We have no problems with the properly documented aliens; it is the illegal ones that are giving the trouble," Mr. Thompson said.

"There have been instances in some of the northern villages in the country where these illegal aliens, who are involved with the cultivation and trafficking of marijuana, have issued 'curfew orders' to villagers with threats and intimidation if they tell the authorities of their drug operations," the Minister

said.

"We know who the major drug dealers are" he added, "but it is difficult to apprehend them for lack of proper evidence...We are waiting for them to make the wrong move so that we can pin them down."

In a recent swat operation in the Orange Walk District the Police Tactical Services Unit raided seven villages and arrested 117 illegal aliens among them Guatemalans, Mexicans, Salvadorans and Hondurans who were subsequently deported by court order. More recently the Police Tactical Services Unit manually destroyed a dozen marijuana plantations with about 7,000 marijuana trees.

Mr. Thompson has said that aerial spraying with the new chemical "Round-up" will continue at intervals.

TURMOIL IN U.S. COULD MAKE RELIANCE 'DISASTROUS'

Belize City AMANDALA in English 6 Feb 87 p 2

[Letter to the Editor]

[Text]

Editor Sir,

Having listened to President Reagan's "State of the Nation" address Tuesday night, and the Democratic Party's reply, I am left in no doubt that that country is in the grips of a serious crisis. The daunting trade deficit, the tremendous foreign debt, the large scale foreclosures of farms, a tattered foreign policy and an aged President who appears to be swiftly losing his grips on the reins of control, all add up to a truly dismal picture.

History has shown that when mighty nations like the United States find themselves in crisis, it has a catastrophic effect on satellite countries that depend so much upon them for their survival.

As evidence of that, we in Belize are already feeling the pinch. Over a year ago the United States started cutting back on aid programmes world wide and those cutbacks directly affected programmes in Belize. More recently there was the cut back on the amount of sugar to be imported into the United States. That was another blow that will hurt Belize severely. Indications are that these are merely the beginnings of a protectionist policy

which the United States is in the process of implementing. The effect of that policy will be even greater hardships for Belize.

Over the last three or four years Belize has been relying more and more heavily on loans, grants and other types of assistance from the United States for its survival. USAID, and its ancillary U.S. agencies now seem largely responsible for the programmes and policies that are being implemented in the country both in the private as well as the public sectors. Despite, or perhaps, because of this fact our economic situation is worsening rather than improving. In light of the present U.S. crisis our heavy reliance on the United States can only turn out to be disastrous for us.

Surely the time has come when we the people of Belize must look to ourselves and to our own devices and resources for our survival.

In the final analysis only the people of Belize have the obligation to, and can truly save Belize for Belizeans.

Respectfully Yours,  
(Signed) Wilfred P. Elrington.

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CSO: 3298/160

# RUMORS OF DEVALUATION; ESQUIVEL RESPONDS, HAILS ECONOMY

## Basis for Rumors

Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 22 Feb 87 p 1

[Text]

BELIZE CITY,  
FEBRUARY 19, 1987

Despite strong denials from the Central Bank, rumours persist that Government is considering a devaluation of the Belize dollar.

The Budget exercise being carried out, coupled with several recent moves by the Central Bank, indicates that authorities are concerned about the country's currency. These include an estimated \$40m or more shortfall in the national budget, the clamp down by the Central Bank on the issue of foreign exchange permits and the sudden cancellation of several US dollar accounts held by local business houses with the commercial banks.

The Esquivel Government is said to be resisting a devaluation demanded by a certain powerful financial international agency. Whether he is sufficiently in a strong position to continue to do so is anybody's guess since precise information about the government's true financial position has been difficult to deter-

mine.

The 1986/87 budget has a deficit of \$34m to be balanced by domestic borrowing, USAID loans and the Belize Loans Act. Of this huge deficit, a lump sum of \$10m was projected to be collected via the sale of citizenship bonds. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has so far refused to say if any of these bonds have been sold.

As foreign exchange earnings continue to decline the pressure for a devaluation may well become irresistible.



## Economic Background

Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 22 Feb 87 pp 5, 8

[Text]

The rumour mills churn in the financial capital of the country speculating that Government will devalue the Belize dollar by twenty percent. It appears that there is good reason for this anxiety in the business community, for several tell-tale signs loom on the horizon indicating that, as Cabinet considers the Budget for the next financial year, its consideration of the devaluation question has already created considerable disagreement and threatens serious conflict between the various camps or caucuses of sundry hues.

Word leaks that the performance of the last budget was a disaster. Many projections of income fell well short of target. Others hardly produced at all and the financial upswing, so optimistically projected, was a mirage. The need to find additional funds to meet the extravagances of government and to manage the economy without further drastic punishment to the people is an exercise testing the skills and magic of Belmopan's Mandrakes. The task is the greater aggravated by the competing demands for more money by Ministers who have grown suspicious and mistrustful of one another. Each has his own pet scheme which requires money and none has so far been willing to yield to the other. As a result, some fifty million dollars of additional funds is being demanded by Ministers, from a people already overtaxed and bleeding from the very marrow of their bones.

At the same time, although officially denied, the Central Bank of Belize for the last three weeks has systematically tightened foreign exchange permits. Some pundits estimate that as much as forty percent of the value of applications have been denied and another twenty to twenty-five percent are the subject of extensive scrutiny.

In some cases, reports complain of near interrogation over permits for the purchase of food, so much so, that predictions of shortages are being made in some quarters. In this regard, the country's bankers were hauled into the Central Bank last week. That nobody

will discuss the results of this meeting adds fuel to the fire and the Governor, pointing to his reserves in New York, mollifies nobody's concerns.

The confusion is heightened by the analysis often argued, about the significance of the thirty percent slide in value of the American dollar against the Japanese Yen or the German Mark or against other strong foreign currencies. Knowing that the value of the Belize dollar is pegged to the value of the U.S. dollar, when that currency depreciates, a corresponding devaluation of our dollar is calculated in purchases from non-dollar sources. Some traders therefore bawl that a further devaluation of twenty percent works out at a devaluation in real terms of fifty percent.

Anxiety turned to panic when word was exchanged that a wholesale review of foreign exchange accounts resulted in tons of notices from the Central Bank for their immediate closure. Many, accustomed to operating through these accounts, found themselves overnight deprived of this facility and confronting the excessive costs of converting foreign currency, from their sales abroad, to Belize currency plus the additional costs for reconvertng it back again into US dollars, to pay commitments abroad. Some express hope that these costs can be passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices for goods.

The business community is in shambles. knowing not where to turn, worried sick at the prospects, yet unable to hear the voice of its government in explanation of all these upsetting events. Operating in a vacuum, they have begun to take desperate measures which may in the end further exacerbate the delicate situation.

Underneath this disturbance are groans of intermeddling.

An even more obnoxious odor permeates the whole stinking business. Those who oppose the concept of devaluation in Belize find strange adversaries whose influence penetrate the cabinet

walls. The pressures for devaluation seem to find weighty advocates from Gabourel Lane and from the multi-national monster of the north. These foes make considerable opponents and long odds grow in their favour. When the Minister of Finance ran away from the IMF to the AID he seemed to have catapulted from the frying pan into the fire. And fire burns!

#### Esquivel Denial

FL211456 Bridgetown CANA in English 1434 GMT 21 Feb 87

[Text] Belmopan, 21 Feb (CANA)--The Belize Government has no plans to devalue the dollar, according to Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Manuel Esquivel.

He made the comment in Parliament yesterday, after the opposition-backed newspaper, THE BELIZE TIMES, had said a devaluation was planned.

The prime minister indicated in the House of Representatives that the Belizean economy was not in the type of situation which warranted a devaluation.

He said that Belize's net reserves had increased from 17.6 million dollars (one Bel dollar, 49 U.S. cents) in 1984 to a present 18.7 million. External assets were estimated at 60 million dollars--a gain from the 11.3 million dollars before his government took office in 1984.

Esquivel reported that deposits in commercial banks today totalled 117 million dollars--an increase of 31 million since 1981.

#### Esquivel Attack on Paper

FL210324 Belize City Domestic Service in Spanish 0120 GMT 21 Feb 87

[Text] Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel has made a statement on the state of Belize's economy and the continuing development of Belize on the path to prosperity.

The prime minister, who was speaking in the House of Representatives this morning, said that recently, the Government and people of Belize have been the victims of an insolent and subversive campaign carried out by the newspaper THE BELIZE TIMES.

This campaign, said the prime minister, has the goal of sabotaging the people's intention of reaching an honorable and peaceful solution to the problem with Guatemala and it is part of a deliberate effort to undermine the new economic stability of Belize.

The prime minister said that these subversive attacks on the nation's security should not be ignored.

Here is the prime minister's statement to the House of Representatives, read by (Rene Villanueva).

[Begin recording] While the critical reports against the Government of Belize appear every week in THE BELIZE TIMES, [words indistinct] subversive attacks against the nation's security cannot be ignored.

This publication has constantly tried to sabotage the hopes of our country in reaching a peaceful and honorable agreement to the problem with Guatemala. It has constantly tried to undermine our new economic stability.

The two have a strong impact on the nation's security and the well-being of our [word indistinct]. The total (fabrication) that was published in this week's edition of that irresponsible newspaper on the devaluation of the Belizean dollar cannot be listened to. They were in contact with the governor of the Central Bank and thus they were very familiar with the events.

Generosity toward the simple minds [words indistinct] that produce the content of that paper does not excuse them on the grounds that they were the ones who brought our country to the brink of economic collapse and placed us at the hands of the international [word indistinct] in 1984.

This is why one cannot expect that they have an understanding of the progress made by the government of the United Democratic Party [UDP] in the 2 years since our election.

We cannot believe, Mr President, that this article is simply the result of innocent imbecility. It is a deliberate attempt to cause anguish among the citizens and shake the economic stability of the country.

Mr President, I remind this honorable assembly that in December, 1984, our country's net reserves were a negative \$17.6 million. Today the UDP has converted [passage indistinct].

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CSO: 3298/160

BRIEFS

GUATEMALAN GRAIN--The publication CENTRAL AMERICAN REPORT of February 6, 1987, states that the National Agricultural Marketing Institute of Guatemala approved the sale of 60,000 quintals (6/million pounds) of Peten-grown grain to Belize. (See Page 3) The report says that the wholesale price is Q25 cents Bze.) per pound and that the price to the consumer never dropped below Q65 per quintal (about 52 cents Bze.) per pound. The importation of some 3,000 tons of grain into Belize will reduce the domestic market for the Belizean farmers. Such a policy tends to ruin agriculture in Belize. [Text] [Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 22 Feb 87 p 1] /9274

NEW FINANCIAL SECRETARY--Word is out in the Capital that Belizean Keith Arnold will soon be appointed Deputy Financial Secretary replacing Rudy Sanchez. Arnold was reportedly recruited from Miami, Florida by Foreign Minister Dean Barrow through his emissary Financial Secretary Edney Cain. Arnold taught at the Belmopan Comprehensive School and at the Wesley College some years ago but left the country rather suddenly. He later joined the Caribbean Development Bank from where he moved to Miami. He is expected to take over his new post within the next few days. [Text] [Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English 22 Feb 87 p 1] /9274

CSO: 3298/160

## BLAIZE GETS SUPPORT IN NNP; CABINET RESHUFFLE SCORED

## Report on 'Aborted' Coup

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 14 Feb 87 p 1

["'Another VOICE Special,' by our political reporter": "Palace Coup Aborted"]

[Text]

MOVES were made to effect a "Palace coup" in Grenada last week, when elements within the ruling New National Party sought to put together a group of at least seven parliamentarians to declare allegiance to someone other than Prime Minister the Right Honourable Herbert Augustus Blaize and report this to the Governor General.

According to information reaching the *Voice* the persons doing the canvassing are not themselves parliamentarians, but represented themselves as acting in the best interest of the party and the country. Six members of the House of Representatives had already signified agreement, the report said, when a certain female legislator was approached to align herself with the group. Her response was to reveal the plot to the Prime Minister who thereupon summoned to his office one of the six, who he had always regarded as one of his loyalists, and castigated him. This appears to have at least deferred the plan, but it is well known

that the division in the party is widening rather than narrowing.

Prime Minister Blaize himself made reference to this in his Independence Day address at Queen's Park, when he appealed for unity, and in calling for the singing of his theme song "Bind us together Lord", he said when they join hands and sing this they will not be able to go and do their nonsense. It was noticeable, however, that certain Ministers did not join in the singing and one said to the *GRENADIAN VOICE* that he cannot join in such mockery.

Blaize missed an opportunity to practice some of this unity himself when he failed to show up at the magnificent "Buy Local Fiesta" held in St. Paul's under the aegis of Hons. George Brizan and Francis Alexis.

When the NNP Executive met in one of its bi-monthly meetings on Tuesday, the Prime Minister came under attack when a report from a select Committee (headed by Dr. John Watts and including Senator Benet Andrew), appointed to look into the poor image of the party and made recommendations, was being discussed. Discussions on the report centred around the comments on factionalism

in the party and the recommendation that talks should again be held between the leaders of the three groups which came together to form the NNP. Also to be included in the talks aimed at finding rapprochement are Dr. Keith Mitchell and Mr. Tillman Thomas who are seen as key elements on opposite sides of the division in the party, and assumedly neutral persons in Dr. John Watts, and Senators Lawrence Joseph and Benet Andrew.



## Paper Urges Resignation

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 14 Feb 87 p 1

[Editorial: "Step Down Gracefully"]

[Text]

BELSHAZZAR, King of the Chaldeans, in Biblical times, saw the writing on the wall which heralded the end of his life and the giving of his kingdom to the Medes and Persians.

We suspect that Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Herbert Blaize, has also now seen the writing on the wall, but unlike Belshazzar he may still have time to save the "kingdom" for the people and even preserve his political life.

Although talks are scheduled to be held to, once again, aim at bringing some semblance of unity to the shambles that goes by the name of New National Party, signs are that it may already be too late, and the move to effect a "Palace Coup" last week is evidence of this.

The pity of it all, is that so many people, local and foreign, at home and abroad, have made efforts to show Mr. Blaize, during the past two years plus, the need to make serious efforts to unify and strengthen his disintegrating party; but he appears to have adopted all along a pharasaical attitude, and expected others to do all the adjusting. And, unfortunately, the few people whose opinions Mr. Blaize countenances, appear to have failed him and the country, by not assisting in the attempt to guide and advise the Prime Minister, on the need to be less obdurate and, given the circumstances which gave him the opportunity to be at the helm of this country, the need to practice the art of give and take to a nicety.

Let us spell it out clearly once again, for the paranoid Ministers and party supporters, who constantly accuse us of being "the enemy" and trying to "destroy" them, and in fact see an enemy in every critic. Of the parties which offered themselves for election in 1984 we, like the majority of trusting and hopeful Grenadians, favoured the NNP to take the responsibility to lead the country out of the morass it was in. Of the elected members of NNP we favoured Mr. Blaize to lead the government - while keeping our fingers crossed that he would see the need for change from his old attitude, which helped him to lose the 1967 elections. But the trust of all of has been betrayed and our hopes are dashed.

We would still like to see all the people concerned answering the famous President Kennedy question (... what you can do for your country) by really bridging the gap for the good of all. But, as we have said, we believe it is now too late. What then is left?

We believe we speak in the interest of our country when we say that if indeed it is too late and another *Palace Coup* is mounted it would be Prime Minister Blaize's DUTY to step down gracefully and let the chosen successor receive the mantle, rather than do the stubborn thing and plunge the country into the chaos of a new election, which could at best have an indecisive result and, more likely an undesirable one, by dissolving parliament, which the Constitution gives him the right to do. The action he takes will determine whether posterity, as well as the present, will praise him or condemn him.

## Support Rally

FL232359 Bridgetown CANA in English 1747 GMT 23 Feb 87

[Text] St Georges, 23 Feb (CANA)--Three cabinet ministers in Grenada's ruling New National Party (NNP) last night charged at a public meeting here that there was a plan afoot to undermine the leadership of Prime Minister Herbert Blaize.

The three--Ben Jones (external affairs), Keith Mitchell (public utilities) and George McGuire (local government)--addressed a crowd of about 500 in the St George's North West constituency.

The ministers did not say who was behind the plot or give any details, but made it clear it came from within and that they stood behind Blaize, since there was nobody else around to run Grenada with his kind of integrity, honesty and stature.

"If anything happens to Prime Minister Blaize outside of the natural causes, if he is removed by any other means, by connivance, by deceit, by envy, crapaud smoke all ah we pipe (we're all in trouble)," Mitchell declared.

The meeting was called against the backdrop of reports about a recent aborted attempt by elements within the NNP to remove Blaize. The plot fell through when it was leaked to the prime minister.

Jones said that there was a "deliberate plan" to undermine the NNP from within and to create the impression that Blaize was running "a one man show."

McGuire and Mitchell told the crowd there were nine "solid stalwarts" of the NNP prepared to stand firm and to see Grenada through a period of peace. This is an apparent reference to the fact that eight of the 12 NNP parliamentarians signed a statement last week pledging allegiance to the ailing 69-year-old prime minister, amid the squabbling.

The eight were Jones, Mitchell, McGuire, Health Minister Danny Williams, and junior ministers Pauline Andrews, Grace Duncan, Felix Alexander, and Alleyne Walker.

The MP's who declined to sign were Labour Minister Dr Francis Alexis, Education Minister George Brizan, and Junior Minister for Legal Affairs Tillman Thomas.

Brizan and Alexis have often been identified here as the leaders of a faction known to be opposed to what has been described as the autocratic leadership style of the prime minister.

Brizan and Alexis dissolved their respective parties and joined Blaize's Grenada National Party (GNP) to form the NNP just before December 1984 general elections here. Since its landslide victory at the polls--it won 14 of the 15 seats--the NNP has been hit by deep internal divisions.

Brizan, Alexis, and Thomas were absent from last night's NNP meeting.

"...when they come to me and talk the nonsense about Prime Minister Blaize being removed, I tell them that I ain't want no part of that," Mitchell told the meeting.

McGuire charged that Blaize would "get all of them" plotting against him, while Jones discounted the suggestion that Blaize was autocratic.

"We have to stand fast and look at those people who are trying to destabilise our party and our country because the future development of this country depends on the stability of NNP," Jones remarked.

#### Criticism of Cabinet Reshuffle

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 21 Feb 87 p 7

[Lloyd Noel column "On Law and Politics": "Parliamentary Democracy"]

[Excerpts] By the time you are reading this article, a number of changes may already have taken place--or on the verge of taking place in Parliament. These changes are intended to, and will affect our system of Parliamentary Democracy, for the remainder of the term of office of our current Parliamentarians--however long or short that may be.

Whatever people may think, however, we nevertheless have to persist with this system of Parliamentary Democracy, not so much because it is the very best system imaginable, but more so because the other "system we were forced to try, was very much worse than the one now in existence. And it has always been my considered opinion, that it is not Parliamentary Democracy--just as it isn't the Constitution--that is bad or unworkable, but the people who are supposed to make them work, that either abuse their newly acquired authority and power, or scorn the lowly approach by which they did ascend.

Matters of grave concerns are occurring and recurring with increasing regularity almost daily, but there is never any meeting of Parliament to discuss them or to record the happenings. All sorts of commissions are set up and their reports handed in, but never any debate on them in Parliament.

The foregoing is not meant to suggest that the NNP Government forms the first set of culprits in that regard; on the contrary, they are simply following well-implanted foot-steps of Parliamentary mis-use and abuse.

And why must our political leaders be always so bent on putting the party before the country and the people as a whole?

There is absolutely no doubt that the Prime Minister has the constitutional right to re-shuffle the Cabinet as he sees fit. But there is equally no doubt, whatsoever, that in so doing he must put the national interest at the very top of his list of considered priorities, and everything else, including the Party, must come thereafter.

With that position of reality in mind, can even the staunchest supporter of the NNP put his hand over his heart and say that the recent re-shuffle of Cabinet posts is in the best interest of the Country?

Granted, that the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Justice merely existed in name only, and for over eighteen months we had no Attorney General, therefore someone had to be appointed to do the job, and who better qualified for that position than Dr Francis Alexis? But he was just as qualified in December, 1984, and that Ministry was as important then as it is now, so why now?

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and to a lesser extent Tourism, has been the most effective and productive Department of this Government in its entire two years and two months of Office. Every self-respecting farmer or fisherman, am sure, would agree with me on this. So why move Mr George Brizan from that position at this point in time? Admittedly he takes Fisheries to Education with him, but what is the linkage between those two departments to lump them together?

And talking about linkage and lumping together, what is the relevance between Agriculture, Land and Forestry and External Affairs, for which Mr. Ben Jones now takes responsibility? What benefit is it to the National interest to leave the Minister of Communication and Works and public utilities intact (except for Civil Aviation), when that Minister has been the subject of the most consistent criticism by all and sundry over the past eighteen months?

Can anyone show me how those re-shuffles will benefit the country? And would not the party suffer just as much and more, because whereas the country goes on for ever, the party is just a foot print on the sand of time?

I have discussed these changes with many people, young and old, rich and poor, male and female, and the overwhelming consensus is, that if all our Government Parliamentarians accept these changes without protest, then they are all as guilty of the

greatest dis-service to their people and country - as the P.M. and his advisers.

I am not waiting to be wise after the events have happened, nor am I sitting on the fence to see which way the wind is blowing; it is my considered opinion that these changes are not in the best interest of the people of this country, nor of the country's economic development at this point in time; nevertheless, I sincerely hope and trust that time may prove me wrong.

#### Assessment of Ministers

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 21 Feb 87 pp 8, 12

[Unattributed "Special Feature Report": "The Changing of the Guard"]

[Text]

THE beautiful lady picked up the telephone that was ringing for the last thirty seconds or so; "Ministry of Labour" she said, "I am sorry, Ministry of Social Services," she

quickly corrected herself.

Times had changed, and oh how they had changed.

Following last week-sudden the person upstairs, or downstairs



for some, was not the same person that always seemed to be there.

Added to that a few Permanent Secretaries were changed. Otto George, formerly Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture is now the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social Services. Osbert Benjamin will now be the Permanent Secretary's cabinet reshuffle announcement by Prime Minister Herbert Blaize, a new life began in the middle of this week, not only for ministers who had to leave staff whom they had come to love and know, but also whole departments were changing buildings since some of the ministries were split. All of a Secretary in the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Labour, while the word from the Government Information Service is that Florence A.I. Rapier will be the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and External Affairs.

The only Parliamentary Secretary to be adjusted has been Norton Noel who is now responsible for Social Services and Local Government, and not Labour anymore.

The new Attorney General and Legal Affairs Minister Dr. Francis Alexis will now be based on Church Street in the A.G.'s office near to the courts, while Mr. George McGuire is now on Scott Street in the old Ministry of Labour building. George Brizan has returned to the Young Street building of the Ministry of

Education where he had spent some years in the past as a senior education officer. It is not clear whether Ben Jones will be based in the Botanic Gardens' office or the one on Archibald Avenue.

Since the cabinet reshuffle was announced there has been a lot of talk about whether it was the best move at the best time. The farmers are definitely angry with the removal of Brizan from the Ministry of Agriculture, and so far one farmers' organisation, the Productive Farmers Union has reportedly written to the Prime Minister expressing their concern about the change. This week there were even talks of some farmers taking to the streets and demonstrating against the change. That never materialised, and according to one source, it was discouraged by Brizan himself.

The former Minister of Agriculture had apparently won a lot of hearts with the work he had done while in the ministry, and there were reports that agriculture was on the up.

Brizan was never known to be an agricultural wizard before 1984 - a little backyard gardening maybe, and that was all. But he adjusted, fitted, and apparently learned.

Now he is batting on a more familiar wicket. It has been in the field of education that he has spent most of his adult life as teacher in the classroom and as an administrator.

As a former principal of the Grenada Boys

Secondary School, Mr. McGuire's type of "pitch" would have also been education. But as they say, two batsmen cannot bat on the same end. Even if it means adjusting oneself, he will have to learn to cope in Social Services, Local Government and Civil Aviation. As far as Local Government and such things as Social Security are concerned, McGuire has gotten a good start, and a lot of hard work has gone into seeing that the system of local government be re-introduced in Grenada, as the NNP promised in its election campaign, no wonder Alexis says he "knows how it feels to view the promise land and not be able to enter." McGuire will lead us there.

As a lawyer by upbringing, Alexis should cope well as Attorney General and Legal Affairs Minister.

And inspite being a lawyer, Jones, in theory, should make a good Agriculture Minister. Being from a strong agricultural community in St. Andrew's with a firm background in it, and having served on a number of farmers' board, he has an idea of the feelings, wishes and fears of the people in the sector.

Jones, McGuire, Brizan and Alexis were the four ministers who were most markedly affected by the reshuffle (the others were just barely touched). For the four they will be virtually starting all over. It is like reaching 99 and getting out --- they will have to start their innings all over -- and they will need to bat to suit the change in the times. It could be a sticky wicket for some.



## Jones on Cabinet Changes

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 25 Feb 87 p 24

[Text]

**ST GEORGE'S,  
Feb. 24, CANA**

Grenada's External Affairs Minister Ben Jones has come out in defence of Prime Minister Herbert Blaize, who has been under attack in some quarters following the recent Cabinet reshuffle.

Jones told a public meeting of the ruling New National Party (NNP) in the St. George's North West Constituency Sunday night that there was

nothing malicious about the reshuffle as some people have alleged.

It was the privilege of any Prime Minister to reshuffle his Cabinet whenever he sees it necessary, Jones said.

He said the aim of the reshuffle was "to give all of us an opportunity to run other ministries because all of the ministries have different complexities".

Some elements within the feuding coalition Government have claimed that the re-

shuffle was aimed at removing some ministers from portfolios with influential power bases.

Several farmers are known to be opposed to the transfer of George Brizan from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Education.

The agriculture portfolio was given to Jones who last week had to assure farmers that there would be no changes in the programmes initiated by

the popular Brizan.

Jones said persons trying to put labels on the reshuffle were intent on creating "mischiefs", so as to create disorder and to get some people to feel uneasy and to react in a way to ultimately destabilize the party.

"It's a perfectly normal thing made difficult in the course of a government's term that the Prime Minister reshuffles to give people exposure to other areas", Jones added.

## Blaize on Democracy

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 17

[Text]

ST GEORGE'S, Wednesday (CANA) — Grenada's Prime Minister Herbert Blaize has hailed parliamentary democracy as the system of government that will bring lasting peace to the world.

"Parliamentary democracy is what is going to bring the world right," he told participants attending a one-week Commonwealth Parli-

mentary Association (CPA) here.

"Parliamentary democracy is the saviour for the world but we must ensure that we don't just take it for granted, but make sure that we pass it along to all levels of the society so that children, adults and everybody will hail this system as the one that can and will bring the world to peace one day," he added.

## 'Over-Ambition' of NNP

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 28 Feb 87 p 2

[Text] Newly appointed Opposition Senator, Pope McLean says that the problem with the NEW National Party Government is over-ambition on the part of some members.

He made the point in an exclusive interview with the *Grenadian Voice* and against the background of the reported palace coup attempt, and the cabinet reshuffle, announced by Prime Minister Blaize.

"Some ministers, are too inordinately ambitious, and because of that, it would take them much time to remove from juvenile immaturity to adult responsibility, and that is the evil that haunts Grena-

da politics," he stated.

McLean, who was the lone unsuccessfully NNP candidate in the December 1984 elections, was appointed an opposition Senator recently by new Opposition Leader Phinsley St. Louis. McClean said that his new appointment has effectively

ended his association with the ruling party. He said he had no hesitation in taking up the senate post when it was offered to him because he has been dissatisfied with the way things were being run in the party and government.

McClean indicated that he will be part of the talked-about new party, the Organisation for National Equality, ONE, a group which he said will catch the eye and the nod of the people of the country

since national unity and equality is a big issue. There are reports

that the groundwork is being laid for the launching of this new party. St. Louis is tipped to be the leader.

Asked about if he was dissatisfied with the way he was treated by the NNP after he lost his seat, McLean said "this is questionable" but that now was not the best time to deal with the issue.

/9274

CSO: 3293/161

## REPORTAGE ON BLAIZE BUDGET, REVIEW OF ECONOMY

## Sector Performance Levels

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 28 Feb 87 p 8

[For a 21 February 1987 CANA report on Prime Minister Blaize's review of the Grenada economy in 1986, see the Latin America DAILY REPORT FBIS-LAM-87-038 of 26 February 1987, pages S1, S2]

[Text]

*Prime Minister Herbert Blaize presented the 1987 Grenada budget in parliament last week Friday. During his presentation he reviewed the performance of the various sectors of the economy last year. We bring you now, as a public service, what he said on the performance of the economy last year.*

On the basis of preliminary data compiled by the Ministry of Finance, the performance of the economy measured up to expectations in 1986, achieving an overall growth in real terms of 4.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Total new employment, however, was only 3,692 persons as compared with 3,751 persons in 1985. This was attributed to the slow start-up of certain

manufacturing enterprises. It should be noted, however, that new employment in 1986 fell slightly short of the planned target of the 4,000 jobs.

On the average, prices fell during 1986 by 0.8%, as compared with an increase of 1.8% in 1985. The attention of Honourable members is drawn to the fact that it is the first time in several years that this country has registered negative inflation. This has been largely due to the removal of certain taxes as part of the Fiscal Reform Programme introduced in 1986, thus providing consumers with a gain in their real purchasing power and an improvement in their standard of living. Largely contributing to the decreases in prices were household supplies,

fuel transport and clothing.

The balance of payments registered a small deficit on the current account which was largely financed by official grants and loans.

It is significant that the overall growth was attained against a background of falling prices. The principal sectors which led to growth in 1986 were construction (15.0% increase), hotel and restaurant (10.2% increase), transport and communication (10% increase).

#### SECTORAL PERFORMANCE

##### Agriculture

Performance of this sector was mixed in 1986. Bananas experienced a decline in production to a level of 17.9 million pounds. Positive efforts have, however,

been made to improve banana quality and provide more benefits to farmers. Cocoa output fell by 24% to a low level of 3.6 million pounds, while nutmegs and mace grew by 16%. As a result, nutmeg production reached a high level of 5.1 million pounds. On the other hand, all three commodities fetched higher prices in world markets, with nutmegs and mace being particularly robust.

A significant development for the nutmeg industry in 1986 was a provisional agreement reached by the Grenada Co-operative Nutmeg Association with nutmeg producers in Indonesia regarding a minimum price of \$16,200 per tonne for first grade nutmeg. The price for first grade whole mace has been set at \$31,050 per

tonne. The proposed cartel which is expected to be finalised on the occasion of a visit to Grenada of an Indonesian delegation later this month, should significantly boost revenues in future. In the meantime, as a result of better prices obtained in 1986, nutmeg farmers enjoyed a bonanza in the receipt last Christmas of a \$5 million bonus - the highest ever paid in the history of the Industry.

Data on the other crops for 1986 are still tentative but indications are that growth in this sector would not exceed 2%, owing to adverse weather conditions.

#### Tourism

Tourist arrivals moved from 142,700 in 1985 to 171,200 in 1986, a 20% increase. Stay-over visitors increased by 10.2% from 52,000 to 57,300, whereas cruise-ship passengers rose from 90,700 to 113,900, an increase of 25.5%. Also, in 1986, 80 more cruise-ships visited than the 173 that came in 1985. An estimated EC\$72 million was spent by tourists in 1986, an increase of 12% over 1985.

This increased activity in the Tourist Industry made an impact on a number of sectors, particularly hotels and restaurants which showed an increase in real terms of 10.2% in 1986.

#### Manufacturing

The 1986 Budget had forecasted an 8%

increase in Manufacturing, based on the commencement of operations of twenty-four (24) businesses which were approved by the Industrial Development Corporation and the start-up of twin-plant operations in Grenada by three U.S. Firms. To date, about eighteen (18) of these businesses have started operations, most of which began in the latter part of the year. Thus the full expected impact was not felt in production levels in 1986.

Performance within existing Firms was also mixed. Soft Drinks did well; Feed showed some increase, while Cigarettes and Edible Oil just managed to stay positive. Decreases were recorded for the commodities. In particular, Beer, Malt and Stout, as well as Soap production deteriorated badly, falling by 10%, 12%, 9% and 32.8% respectively. These Industries, together with Soft Drinks, have complained of unfair competition due to high level of imports. The Trade Division of the Ministry of Finance is currently considering representations by the brewing industry for protection.

#### Construction

There was increased activity in all areas under this sector. Starts have been made to new hotels and additions to existing ones. An additional 63,000 sq.ft. of factory space was constructed. The housing sub-sector was

particularly active, showing growth in real terms by 15% over 1985.

Many sources of data corroborate what can be observed on the ground. Imports of building and construction materials for the first three quarters of 1986, were EC\$21.7 million, \$7.4 million more than the 1985 total. It may be remembered that in 1985, construction activity was high as well. The amount of money lent by commercial banks for house and land purchases rose from EC\$3.5 million in 1985 to nearly EC\$16.5 million in 1986. In terms of applications for permits to build new houses, 429 were made in 1986, compared with 306 for 1985 and 149 for 1984.

#### Electricity and Water

This sector increased in real terms by 13% for 1986, as a result of increased production of electricity and water. Production of water increased by 2.6%, whereas electricity generated increased by 17%. This latter increase was mainly as a result of electricity being made available on an expanding scale to rural areas.

#### Commerce

The majority of Firms surveyed considered 1986 an extremely good year with a considerable number having realised profits.

Retail sales by the principal outlets registered an increase of 2.6% over 1985.

Mainly contributory to this increase was building materials which showed growth of only 4.4% owing to recent increases in direct imports by investors and homeowners. The value of building materials sold during the period was \$12.83 million, as compared with \$12.30 million for 1985.

#### Banking

The liquidity of the Banking sector was sustained in 1986, with a 27% overall growth in deposits to \$229.5 million as at 31st December, 1986, compared with \$180.1 million as at 31st December, 1985. Savings deposits recorded the largest increase, EC\$19.3 million or a 22.9% increase. Time deposits followed with an increase of EC\$18.7 million or 32.4%; Demand deposits also increased by EC\$11.4 million or 29.9%.

It is significant that residents accounted for \$42.7 million, or 86.4% of the total increase in Deposits in 1986. This is a reflection of the growing confidence of Grenadians in their country, and the beneficial effects of the Fiscal Reform package which was introduced in 1986. Honourable Members would recall that one of the principal objectives of the programme was to increase the level of savings within the economy.

At the same time, domestic credit increased by EC\$44.3 million during January to December, 1986, as

compared with a nearly EC\$31 million increase for 1985. The loans to deposits ratio increased marginally at the end of December, 1986, in relation to the position at 31st December, 1985, as a result of higher growth in loans and advances relative to deposits.

#### Trade Exports

There was a 25.8% increase in total exports during 1986, reaching \$75.1 million from \$59.7 million in 1985. Contributing significantly to this increase was re-exports which amounted to \$6.8 million. A large proportion of the re-exports consisted of heavy equipment brought in for use in the Construction Industry. Domestic exports made significant strides, producing a 16.5% overall increase. Total figures for the period were \$68.3 million, as compared with \$58.6 million in 1985. Bananas recorded an increase of 16.5%, while nutmegs and mace registered increase of 105.4% and 38.4% respectively over 1985. Cocoa, on the other hand, exhibited a drop of 16.3%. The position for clothing and fresh fruits was also one of decline. Better export prices, particularly for major agricultural crops, were influential in boosting the export values for 1986.

#### Imports

Moving from \$185.9 million in

1985 to \$224.3 million in 1986, imports recorded an increase of 20.7% over 1985. Details are not yet available, but preliminary indications are that the construction industry as well as other investment and intermediate goods accounted for a large proportion of this increase.

#### Terms of Trade

As a result of strong export prices, the terms of trade in 1986 were extremely favourable. From a 9.4% increase in 1985, the terms of trade increased by 44.8% in 1986 over 1985. This is a welcome sign of improvement in the country's competitiveness and its earning capacity, thus enabling it to obtain more imports for a given quantity of exports, improve its balance of payments and increase employment opportunities.

#### Industrial Development

Current trends in Industrial Development are encouraging. Of the 170 applications received by the IDC for investment projects in 1986, 134 were approved. Implementation has begun on 64 enterprises, while 42 have already commenced operations. These figures compare favourably with the 147 applications received in 1985, with 38 out of 86 approved actually starting operations.

The total employment generated by the 50 new businesses (including 8 projects approved in 1985) which commenced operations in 1986 amounted to 1,804 jobs. These investments were in the areas of manufacturing, hotels and guest houses, restaurants, and agri-business.

Local nationals are playing a major role in the development of the economy since almost 60% of the approved projects which actually opened business in 1986 were owned exclusively by Grenadians. This is a further manifestation of the continuing confidence of Grenadians in this Government's economic policies.



## Additional Details

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER (The Financial Gleaner) in English 6 Mar 87 p 8

[Text]

ST. GEORGE'S, Feb. 26, CANA:

Despite a 4.3 per cent growth in the Grenada economy in 1986, the Government's financial position remained troubled, according to Prime Minister Herbert Blaise.

Blaise reported that capital expenditure last year reached EC67.5 million dollars (one EC dollar 37 US cents) which was approximately 43 million dollars below budgeted levels.

Recurrent expenditure, including debt repayments, amounted to 122.6 million dollars compared with total recurrent revenue of 93.7 million dollars, resulting in a deficit on the Current Account of 28.9 million dollars.

The deficit on Capital Account amounted to 8.4 million dollars, making for an overall deficit of 37.3 million dollars.

"This deficit largely stemmed from a shortfall of 14.3 million dollars in revenue, arising from certain loopholes in the Value Added Tax legislation and the absence of the appropriate administrative machinery for the assessment and collection of the tax," Blaise said.

Blaise said another factor which contributed to the low revenue receipts last year was the highly concessional nature of the business levy which brought in far less tax than its predecessor — an income tax on companies.

In presenting this year's Budget last Friday, the Prime Minister introduced a 2½ per cent business levy in an attempt to further raise the levels of current revenues.

Blaise said that on the expenditure side, postponement of plans to retrench approximately 1 800 Civil Servants last year accounted for about 12.6 million dollars of the deficit.

"As it was not possible to proceed with that plan in 1986, the deficit had to be expanded accordingly," he remarked.

The Government plans to start its retrenchment programme from the end of next month.

Blaise also said the size of the deficit was contained by deferring the payment of debts owed to Libya, Algeria and East Germany and non-payment of contributions to regional

and international institutions.

The Prime Minister said that during 1986 the Government was forced to resort to local borrowing primarily from the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) and commercial banks to assist in financing the Current Account deficit.

This financing was also supplemented by budgetary support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), he added.

### EXPORTS UP

On exports, Blaise said there was a 25 per cent increase in 1986 compared with the previous year. Exports were up from 59.7 million dollars to 75.1 million dollars.

He indicated that re-exports, which amounted to 6.8 million dollars, contributed significantly to the increase.

A large proportion of the re-exports consisted of heavy equipment brought in for use in the construction industry.

According to Blaise, in the period under review domestic exports moved from 58.6 million dollars to 68.3 million dollars.

Exports in the banana industry recorded an increase of 16.5 per cent, while nutmeg and mace production saw increases of 105.4 per cent and 38.4 per cent respectively.

There was however a 16.3 per cent decline in cocoa exports, Blaise noted.

He said clothing and fresh fruits also registered a decline.

He indicated that better export prices, particularly for the major agricultural crops, helped boost the export value for 1986.

Imports rose from 185.9 million dollars in 1985 to 224.3 million dollars in the following year.

Blaise said preliminary indications were that the construction industry, as well as other investment and intermediate goods, accounted for a large proportion of the increase.

Blaise said the terms of trade in 1986 were "extremely favourable" due to strong export prices.

"From a 9.4 per cent increase in 1985, the terms of trade increased by 44.8 per cent in 1986 over 1985. This is a welcome sign of improvement in the country's competitiveness and its earning capacity," he remarked.

[Text]

**FRIDAY FEB. 20**  
- **PRIME MINISTER**  
and **Minister of Finance, Rt. Hon. Herbert Blaize,** will present a \$226.3 million budget to the House of Representatives today comprising \$146.3 million in Recurrent Expenditure and \$80 million in Capital Expenditure.

In what is expected to be a marathon sitting, the House will be asked to deal with seven Bills for all stages, one, the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act, 1987, for Second Reading and Remaining Stages, and one, the Land Transfer Tax Act 1987 for First Reading. There will also be two S.R. & Os for approval.

Among the revenue earning Bills, which are part of what the Prime Minister describes as his Fiscal Reform Programme, and which are expected to be passed in the sitting are:-

\*The *Business Levy Act*, which it is understood will repeal the Act, introduced last year, levying 10% on net profit, after adding back certain non-allowable expenses, and replace it by a tax of 2 1/2% on gross receipts from sales and services. It is understood that businesses with sales in excess of \$50,000 will be exempted.

\*The *Real Property Tax (Amendment) Act* as well as a *Real* /9274

CS01 3298/161

*Property (Rate of Tax) Order, 1987* which, a report says, will fix the rate of tax at one half of one percent of the market value of property. (This Act was sent to the Governor General for assent although it was never debated in the Senate which sent it back for further information).

\*The *Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic (Amendment) Act, 1987*, which will increase drivers' licences, inspection fees and registration fees by 100% to \$30 each, and Motor Vehicles licences will also be increased. Small cars will pay \$100 and the scale will move upward, according to weight, through \$150, \$200 and \$250 for larger cars and jeeps. Commercial vehicles and buses will be required to pay \$50 for the first ton (weight) and \$25 for each additional ton and Agricultural Tractors will pay \$100 flat.

It is believed that the *Land Transfer Tax Act, 1987* (which is down for First Reading) will impose a 5% levy on the transfer of land - even between local people - but it was not clear whether the *Aliens (Land Holding Regulation) (Amendment) Act 1987* will increase the 15% which aliens are already required to pay on the transfer of property.

The *Provisional Collection of Taxes Act 1987* was read only once, when it was first set for all stages, on December 5, but it appears that the

government has decided to push it through despite objections raised by the business community. It gives the Minister of Finance the authority to impose, continue or alter any tax by order, without first having it approved by parliament.

On the Revenue side of the Budget, there is provision for earnings of \$56.3 million from Customs and Excise (including VAT) and \$44.8 million in Taxes making a total of \$101.1 million compared with a total, last year, of \$92 million. Earnings from Government Departments have been put at \$9.3 million, representing an increase of just under \$1 million and the total estimated to be raised in local revenue is \$117 million with \$22.25 million coming from Budgetary support (from foreign sources) and \$7 million in Structural Adjustment bringing the total recurrent revenue estimate to \$146.3 million, which is the amount budgeted also for recurrent expenditure; representing an increase of \$20.3 million over the 1986 estimates.

The largest slice in the recurrent expenditure budget is \$34.24 million, earmarked for the public debt. Next in line is the Ministry of Education, Culture, Co-operative and Fisheries at \$21.6 million followed by Ministry of Health, Housing and Women's Affairs \$16.7

million, Ministry of Finance \$12.5 million, Ministry of External Affairs, Tourism and Agriculture \$12.2 million; Ministry of Works, Communication, Public Utilities and Community Development \$11 million.

The Ministry of Social Services gets \$2.45 million while the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Labour gets a paltry of \$737 thousand, which is less than the \$778 thousand budgeted for Radio Grenada.

The Police Department is down for an increase of nearly \$2 million to \$9.8 million and the Prime Minister's Ministry gets an increase of over \$600 thousand to nearly \$1.5 million. \$6 million have been earmarked for Salary Revision and \$8.7 million to pensions with an increase of nearly \$2 million to cover the government's planned retrenchment programme.

The Capital Expenditure Budget totals \$80 million with \$69.6 coming from external aid. \$31.3 million of that will be spent by the Ministry of Works etc., \$20.7 million by the Ministry of External Affairs, Tourism and Agriculture \$12 million by Health, Housing and Women's Affairs and \$11 million by the Ministry of Finance.

## VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR PROMISES CONTINUED COOPERATION

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 28 Feb 87 p 1

[Text]

**THE** Venezuelan Ambassador to the Caribbean, Mr. Francois Moanack, says his Government will continue its co-operation with Grenada and other countries in the region, despite its high foreign debt. He said this is so because the stability of the region is vital to that of Venezuela.

Mr. Moanack said so at a press conference held last Wednesday afternoon at the Venezuelan Institute in Grand Anse, during the visit of the Venezuelan Coast Guard Frigate

"General Moran."

The Ambassador told reporters, that his Government is considering the possibility of road building in Carriacou, and also they are giving the Government of Grenada a loan to facilitate the building of 200 houses.

He said that because of Venezuela's huge foreign debt, it could not give the government a gift, but they had to settle for a loan on "soft terms".

When asked by one reporter, what was the reason Venezuela was showing so much interest in the Caribbean, Mr. Moanack said, the security of this region is the security of Venezuela, and the security of Venezuela is the security of this region.

Thursday morning, the men on board "General Moran," staged a Military Parade from the Carenage to the Market Square in St. George's, where a wreath was laid by the Captain of the ship, Commander Gilberto Pasos Peinado at the War Memorial.

The ship was scheduled to be opened to visitors Friday, from 1.30 to 3.30 p.m.

According to the Ambassador, this was the first time that a Venezuelan Frigate visited Grenada, and was a move in trying to get the people of both countries to come closer together.

The ship was scheduled to leave Friday afternoon after arriving here on Wednesday.

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CSO: 3298/161

## KEITH MITCHELL INTERVIEWED ON PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

St Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 7 Feb 87 p 12

[Text]

*IN AN EFFORT to bridge the communication gap between the government and the press and generally to bring information to readers on matters of interest and importance, The VOICE begins today a "FACE TO FACE" series in which we hope to present interviews with Ministers and other leaders of the community.*

*Dr. Keith Mitchell was the first to be interviewed, about some of the issues that concern his ministry - the Ministry of Communications, Works and Civil Aviation. Among the things he dealt with were the present state with electricity, road projects, water rates, Grenada Airways and the dismissal of daily paid workers from his ministry recently.*

On electricity

"The Electricity Commission is doing a great job in attempting to bring the service to many areas that do not have it; and at the same time trying to change all the old poles we have. So it is a massive work all around the country.

"Also we are almost ready to turn on the new 2.5 megawatts plant that USAID gave us, the Government. They tell me that it should be ready soon.

They are testing it right now. That means we will have about 9.5 megawatts, far above the peak load in the country. In other words, even if we are doing maintenance, like we've been doing recently, when we have to cut off electricity, this will not be the case when it is installed.

"The Electricity Commission has also paid down on another five megawatt system which they hope they

can get by July-August this year.

On the Eastern Main Road

PARTS of the first phase of the Eastern Main Road project will have to be dug up again shortly.

According to Dr. Mitchell, pipes are to be laid under those roads before it is resurfaced again.

"We will be resurfacing the first phase, which as you know was done by tiff and not stones, and that is causing a lot of problems. In fact the roads are almost all mashed up again, so we have to resurface again. In fact we have to put down pipes too in that road. The PRG (People's Revolutionary Government) did not put pipes in the roads, and a lot of the old pipes are just bursting up and they have to dig it up again," Mitchell said told the VOICE.

He said the third phase of the Eastern Main Road Project

from Grenville to Sauteurs should get started this month.

No increase in water rates

THERE has been no increase in water rates, according to the Minister. Some people have been complaining that they have been made to pay huge increases for water in recent times.

However, Dr. Mitchell said, "What has been happening is that the Central Water Commission is now applying the rates that were given since 1973 legally." He went on; "Some people were not paying properly for water, some people were not paying at all. There were a lot of big people in the country getting off with little or no money for water. Some people are telling you that the water rates jumped by 400 percent, but when you ask them what they were paying, \$50, and they have a big business, so something was wrong."

Dr. Mitchell asked

the public to understand the situation.

"Where is the water commission going to get the money to build the water system?" he asked. "The only way we can get a proper water system in the country is to pay for it," he added.

The Communications Minister went on to explain; "In France

water is done by a private company - a Socialist country - and people pay for water; in America you pay for water. Water is far more costly than telephones and electricity, yet we don't pay for it."

He said; "We seem to understand we have to pay for electricity, we seem to understand we have to pay for telephone, but we don't seem to understand that we have to pay for water."

#### Aviation

Mitchell has hinted that relations between Grenada and the new A.N.R. Robinson government in Trinidad and Tobago are better than with the regime headed by ousted Prime Minister George Chambers. He is hoping the new Government will encourage the Trinidad state-owned airline BWIA to look at Grenada as a more consistent travelling destination.

Dr. Mitchell said, "I think, because of the change in the government situation in Trinidad, and the different atmosphere, relationship with Grenada, we expect that we will get the support of the Government to encourage BWIA to look at Grenada and more consistent travelling to the country." He however was quick to add that "we know BWIA is all stretched too, so we know, although we are asking of the limitations BWIA have at this point in time."

Dr. Mitchell made the comment in explaining why Grenada Airways was set up in the first place. He said it was because the major airlines refused to come to Grenada

directly because of the limited amount of hotel space.

He said it is hoped that the negotiations for the take-over of Grenada Airways will be completed soon.

#### Dismissed workers

THE 33 daily paid workers who were given notices of the termination of their services from the Ministry of Communications and Works are not part of government's retrenchment plan.

Dr. Mitchell said the Prime Minister's talk about retrenchment only has to do with permamnet workers.

"Daily paid workers are like you have a piece of land to fork and you employ somebody to do it. When this is finished you send them home," he said.

Dr. Mitchell went on; "You know we had people on the Eastern Main Road last year for six months because of the stone problems just being paid because we didn't have the guts to tell them, 'Well look we cannot afford it.' Where does the money come from to maintain these things? We have to be making the difficult decisions, otherwise all of us are going to go down by it...and we ain't want that in the country. I am not going to be part of that."

"Let people say their own thing outside there and say that we are firing people. I think its all justified....let me remind you that these are older workers. "In fact what is happening is we have a commitment, that we want

to see committed young Grendians put into work. And I am heartened to see a number of job opportunities being created in the field with a lot of these companies

coming in. I don't think the kind of negative criticisms that you see now is going to hold for long at all.

"The fact is we could play games and wait until the bag burst, but we can't do that".

#### On the rumour that 150 more workers are to go:

"I don't know anything about that. In fact if anything we are hiring people. In fact we will be doing quite a lot more hiring at Queen's Park. At the gravel works, which is now a statutory body, they will be making more blocks, and doing different things. The operations will be expanded. Very soon they will be bringing in machines to make sand at Queens Park. So they will be employing at lot of people.

"Not only that, the Eastern Main Road Project will be employing almost 200 people from Sauteurs to Grenville; masons, carpenters, road builders and so on. We are training people on the project ---- 15 - 20 odd young people to be trained, so that when the project is finished they can build roads.

"Put the positive things in the papers man. The paper has an obligation to do so. Forget the rumours. 150 people, I know nothing about that."



## POLICE COMMISSIONER DESCRIBES DRUGS, CRIME SITUATION

St. Georges THE GRENADIAN VOICE in English 16 Feb 87 pp 6-7, 8

[Text]

*THIS is the second feature of our new column, FACE TO FACE. The first, an interview with Communications and Works Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell was published on Saturday February 7th. From this issue, with VOICE now a twice weekly paper, FACE TO FACE where we interview leaders in the community on matters of interest will be a regular feature of our Tuesday paper. This week our guest is Police Commissioner Russell Toppin. he spoke to us about the present crime, and general security situation in the country, as well as the drug menace, the backlog of cases and the latest on the Madonna Swan murder last month.*

**Q.** What do you feel about the present state of crime in the country and what do you suggest is the reason for the rise in the state of crime?

**A:** Well there could

be manifold reasons why there is this increase of crime in Grenada. I have my personal views about it. All of us in the police force are dismayed and quite worried that this type of crime is taking place. There are certain measures we can take, which we are now taking. We will have to increase our patrols in the area where the offences are being committed. We will have to pay more attention perhaps to the drug-related situation. It is quite obvious that due to the vicious nature of some of these crimes which were unheard of in Grenada a couple years ago - a couple months ago - that the drug situation seemed to have arrived in Grenada. We can know this because we have successfully arrested persons and recovered marijuana, cocaine and this type of very serious type of cocaine you call crack. Quite recently in the "ghetto" (on the Carenage) we did arrest a number

of persons and found in their possession a fair quantity of crack. This means that there are a lot of people who are selling this very dangerous drug to Grenadians. We believe that once a person becomes addicted to the use of crack that the vicious side of his nature will reveal itself in the various types of crimes that are now committed. I am afraid that we will all have to work together to solve this very difficult situation. Once again I call on Grenadians to co-operate with the police. We have been given every possible support by the Government in the provision of vehicles which will make our mobility much better to answer the calls of citizens who are in distress. We have taken certain positive measures to combat the situation - and this will be revealed to the public during the next couple days. But we have taken immediate action to do something about it.

**Q.** Where are you now on the Madonna Swan inquiry? Have you got anywhere with that?

**A:** Well we have explored all the possibilities to detect how and who was responsible for committing the murder. We have offered a reward of 500 dollars, and I see it was backed by certain interested persons to make that reward more substantial. I welcome this and I think it is an opportunity which other members of the public must wish to emulate, and we do hope that out of all of this, persons who have information concerning the murder which they have not yet revealed to the police, that they will come in or speak to me in confidence and I will respect that confidence. We do need assistance from the public to solve, not only this murder, but all the other crimes which are being committed in Grenada.

**Q.** *You said that you picked up some men at the "ghetto" (on the Carenage) and found cocaine. Have you been finding evidence of the harder drugs in a lot of your investigations? How do you see the drug situation generally in the country at the present time.*

**A:** Well, we know that drugs are being circulated in Grenada. From time to time, our raids have revealed that various persons are in charge of and found in possession of cocaine. We have not succeeded as yet in finding any very large quantities, but we are satisfied that there are people who are supplying cocaine to persons in Grenada - these are the big people behind the cocaine racket that we really interested in getting at. But in the meantime we will continue to peg away at those persons who are found in possession - those who sell the cocaine to the members of the public.

**Q.** *Even in the marijuana you have not been able to get hold of anyone who obviously is a pusher or seller?*

**A:** We have arrested persons in possession of large quantities of marijuana as happened in the

ghetto's raid just recently. But don't forget that this drug is home grown and ..... the storage of it is the type of thing I will like to get on to - where they store the cocaine before it reaches the public. We are looking for that and we have not succeeded in getting any breakthrough on that as yet.

**Q:** *How do you feel about the laws that exist now for dealing with people convicted of drug offences. Do you feel we have strong enough laws for dealing with these people?*

**A:** Well, there is a law which was passed in, I think, 1981, which amended the present drug act that we are operating and that act needs only to have the - it only has to be proclaimed law - it has got not only increases in penalties but it sets up procedures for the appointment of a committee to look into the question of drugs, the question of rehabilitation plays an important role in that act, and I think the time is long overdue when we should proclaim that as law and set up the procedures to deal with it. We cannot go along anymore with the existing law as it is.

**Q.** *Have you made or have you plan to make any*

*recommendations to Government regarding the strengthening of that law?*

**A:** It is possible that having made recommendations that the law should be implemented, that on review the Government may have decided that they want to do a little bit more; bring it more up-to-date before they have actually implemented it. So to that extent I can only hope that Government will amend that law and have it published as soon as possible. At one time it was regarded as one of the most advanced pieces of legislation on drugs

**Q:** *The report is that there is a tremendous backlog of cases at both supreme court and magistrate court level. Are you satisfied with the provisions and the staffing that you have for dealing with cases to see them through to a finality?*

**A:** The problem is not one of whether I have sufficient staff to deal with that. Police officers will always be made available. What I think it is important and I think the Senior Magistrate Mr. (Lyle) S. Paul has already expressed those views, that we need perhaps more magistrate's courts,

indeed, above everything else we need to have a separate traffic court to deal with the great number of traffic offences which are being committed at the present time. I have no doubt that the authorities will be looking into this and very soon we will have an additional traffic court.

**Q:** *The reason I raise the question of staff is, it my understanding is that many of the adjournments of cases are requested by the police, and a lot of cases are just hanging there for want of prosecution. What is the problem there?*

**A:** I will have to look into the matter to give any particular reason. I think that all police officers who are witnesses in cases are duty bound to be present when the case is listed for hearing. Of course the other problem may very well be that the civilians who are witnesses in the cases will have to be summoned; and whether the summons are served on them to bring them to court, that's a problem I may have to look into.

**Q.** *Staffing generally - I remembered that you wanted to have the force*

*increased, and that you are now supposed to be working on a volunteer constabulary sort of thing. What is the present situation on that? Are you likely to increase establishments; are you up to strength? What is the score in that area?*

**A:** The Government has been very generous to us the police, having regard to its (Government) stringent economic situation, to have continuously continue to increase the strength of the police force over the past two years. I think the number of police officers which will finally appear in the 1987 estimates will be sufficient for our needs. Over and above that we propose to introduce the Special Reserve Police; bring it into being; the act is already been passed and we will like to bring this police force as a supplement, they can assist the regular police force when necessary. Quite apart from that, there are various government departments that will require special police to do the job, rather than the old watchman system. And we are hoping that we will be able to have these SRP's specially-trained and instructed in their

duties and their powers and the rest et cetera, and we will be able to supply a higher standard of policing. In any event, they will be dressed in a uniform that is quite similar to the police uniform of the regulars; and therefore they will be more respected than the watchmen are now at the present time.

**Q:** *In-so-far as your permitted establishment is now, are you short of men, and are you having problems with the recruitment of men?*

**A:** Yes, I must confess that we are practically scraping the barrel. We have asked, we have tried to even recruit up to our existing establishment for 1986, and we found difficulties. On the other hand we have a tremendous number of wastage. Quite a number of persons who are recruited as police officers subsequently turned out to be undesirable in one form or another. And rather than to retain them to be more expense to the Government, we get rid of them as soon as possible..... as soon as we detect that they will not make suitable policemen. Some of them again, have not been able to stand up to the rigid discipline and the duties and they

have resigned. The resignations have been few; we have had to get rid of a good few of them.

**Q:** *Have you made any approaches to graduating secondary school students with a view to upgrading the quality of the average policeman?*

**A:** Well I did this in 1985 and part of 1986, and I succeeded in getting an number of cadet officers, three of who are now in the police force. We have reached our establishment of our number of cadet officers which is three. But quite apart from the cadet officers, a number of students with secondary education have joined the police force as constables, and I think the police force by and large have a higher percentage of educated police officers than perhaps ten years ago, and I hope this trend will continue because we do need qualified police officers as they go up in the ranks.

**Q:** *When is the SRP likely to be established?*

**A:** Ah, we are sifting the list of persons who have volunteered to the SRP's. We are looking for a suitable

person, as Commandante of the SRP. We have not yet succeeded in getting such a person, but we expect that in the very near future, this problem will be solved. We were hoping to have the SRP's on parade for Independence celebrations, but I am afraid the uniform question has delayed this. I have no doubt that within another six weeks we should have our SRP trained and appearing in uniform.

Q: How do you feel about the security situation in the island? And why is it that Government found it necessary to appoint a security officer at this time?

A: For quite some time now we have been getting firearms from various places, either because it was found by the public and reported to the police or the police received information and executed search warrants and arrested the persons in possession. Recently we had a situation where we found in a garbage can on Tyrell Street a machine gun and 59 rounds of ammunition, and they were all in good order. I view this as an indication that there are persons who have had possession of firearms in their possession for quite some time and they have now decided to get rid of this. To that extent recommendations have been made to the Government to adopt a certain position with respect to whether or not there should be an amnesty for a limited period to afford these people the opportunity of getting rid, or handing in, these firearms.

As far as I am concerned the security situation in Grenada is no different than it was in 1955, 1985, or 1986. I think the position is much more stable in 1987 than it was before, and I think that anything that should arise from a security point of view, we have the trained staff and we have the strength and the police officers to deal with it. So I am not worried and I don't see any reason why Grenadians should be worried. Our problem at the moment is to cope with the increased number of crimes which I am convinced is in some way drug related.

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CSO: 3298/161

## BRIEFS

TOURISM 'SABOTAGE' CHARGE--St George's, Wednesday (CANA)--Grenada's Local Government Minister George McGuire has accused leftist elements of trying to sabotage the island's vital tourism industry. McGuire said the "leftist dogs" are still doing their best to try and ensure that the sector does not develop. "The left have a deliberate plan to destroy our tourism," he told supporters of the ruling New National Party (NNP). [Text] [Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 17] /9274

CSO: 3298/161



GOVERNMENT REASSERTS CLAIM TO BELIZE

Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 30 Dec 86 p 5

[Article by Carlos Garcia Urrea]

[Text] Guatemala, 30 December. The renewal of diplomatic relations with Great Britain does not imply by any means that our country recognizes the independence of Belize, Foreign Minister Mario Quinones said in an interview yesterday with EL GRAFICO.

He added that Guatemala has made it quite clear in the declaration that it does not recognize the independence of Belize as long as the existing dispute is not settled in some manner compatible with the honor of both parties.

As to how the negotiations on Belize now stand, in view of the resumption of relations between Guatemala and Great Britain, the Foreign Minister stated that the juridical status of Belize remains absolutely unchanged.

Furthermore, he added, the government of Guatemala hopes for the cooperation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the search for solutions to the dispute. However, he reiterated, the juridical status is not affected in the least.

The Minister added that Guatemala's claim, and its reservations with respect to its rights remain intact.

Asked whether the renewed relations could contribute to the resolution of the Belize dispute, the Foreign Minister said that Guatemala believes that this is possible. And this was one of the reasons which the government considered in taking this step.

We believe, said Quinones, that it will ease communications, facilitate the holding of meetings, etc. Besides, he said, Guatemala believes that nothing was being gained from continuing in the former situation.

"That is the question," said the Foreign Minister, "What was being gained by the former position?"

The Chancellor conceded that it would not be possible to get Great Britain to reverse its action in granting independence to Belize. Nor would it be possible to persuade the United Nations to reverse its action in recognizing the independence of Belize.

GUATEMALA

SALVADORAN EMIGRANTS ENTER COUNTRY

Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 12 Dec 86 p 28

[Text] Large numbers of Salvadorans, men, women and children, have emigrated to Guatemalan territory, "because the army in El Salvador is drafting people to combat subversion.", some of them told us yesterday during a visit to the offices of this newspaper.

They told us that "the Salvadoran army shows no consideration even for children; just as soon as they can hold a gun they send them off to fight in the mountains, even women and old men."

Most of the Salvadorans have crossed the border without appropriate documentation, since they could not get a passport to leave their country.

They generally sleep in the parks and in the Guatemalan National Railways [FEGUA] station, because in their flight they did not bring enough money to pay for their lodging, and they are practically starving.

They said that they have applied to the Canadian embassy for political asylum, but they are not always well received there; they said that some have been given papers to fill out, and told to present themselves at the embassy in January 1987.

They do not seek assistance at their own consulate, because since most have left El Salvador illegally, they are afraid that they will be deported and their situation may become even more difficult."

"The Salvadoran army", they say, "has raided Guatemalan territory in pursuit of persons fleeing toward Jutiapa with their small children."

The Salvadorans who visited us yesterday said they hoped that the Canadian embassy would take care of them as soon as possible, because they are in danger of being deported back to El Salvador.

They said that life has become impossible for them in their native land, because of visits by the army in the evening and early morning hours to take them away and send them to the front."

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CSO: 3248/161

REMARKS EXCHANGED AT WELCOME FOR BARBADOS AMBASSADOR

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 12 Feb 87 p 5

[Text]

AS two of the founding member countries of Carifta, the precursor of Caricom, Guyana and Barbados have a duty to give fresh stimulus to the process of Caribbean integration, by working together for the economical and social well-being of the region.

This was the view of Vice-President, National Mobilisation and Deputy Prime Minister, Cde. Ranji Chandisingh, at the accreditation ceremony for Barbados' new High Commissioner to Guyana, Mr Joseph Frank Da Silva at the Presidential Secretariat yesterday.

Cde. Chandisingh, who was replying to a speech made by the High Commissioner earlier, expressed

his agreement for the spirit of working together for economic and social well-being of the peoples of the region, and for the success of the regional integration effort.

He said: "I have no doubt that, beyond our Caribbean region, this spirit will continue to direct the efforts which we have been jointly expending within the Commonwealth of Nations, the United Nations and in other international fora, in the struggle for global peace and security, for ensuring respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states and for equitable economic developments."

High Commissioner Da Silva, who is Guyanese born, in his accreditation speech,

noted that integration and contact between Guyana and Barbados have been maintained and considerably strengthened over several decades.

The new High Commissioner pointed out that, "the mechanisms of consultation and collaboration available within the Caribbean Community have over the years provided for meaningful co-operation for the benefit of our two countries and for the region."

He listed a number of factors like the severe worldwide recession which have also reinforced the need for a renewed regionalism and a vibrant trade regime within the Caribbean Community.

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CSO: 3298/162

## PPP'S JAGAN COMMENTS ON U.S. VIEW OF PNC ADMINISTRATION

Georgetown MIRROR in English 15 Feb 87 p 1

[Text]

In a press statement, PPP Leader, Cheddi Jagan, has commented on the US views of the present PNC Administration.

The USAID Deputy Administrator Mr. Morris applauded the foreign and economic policy measures and positions adopted by the government of President Hoyte.

This is understandable because the government has decided to go along the road prescribed by the IMF and the World Bank and their "conditionality", laid down by the Reagan administration.

This road was traversed long before in Latin America and more recently in Jamaica. But the structural adjustment policies did not produce any positive results. Indeed, the position worsened in the 1980s. And

according to the U.N. Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the prospects for the 1985-95 decade are even bleaker, even with the most optimistic assumptions.

Guyana's experience with the IMF/World Bank prescriptions in 1978-81 was a deepening of economic and social crisis at the end of the period. Now, the crisis is more deep seated and it cannot be solved by more financial juggling and managerial/technocratic methods.

The PPP has long ago stated that there can be no solution to the grave economic and social crisis without a political solution.

It is interesting to note that Mr Morris in his observation about "evidence of continuing march towards strengthened

democracies in the region through elections in the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Belize, Dominica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, did not say a word about Guyana.

Presumably rigged elections can be condoned in Guyana once the Hoyte Government conforms to the policy guidelines of the US government.

Nicaragua can be punished for allegedly violating human rights and not holding free and fair elections but Guyana can be aided for actually violating human rights and blatantly rigging elections.

The USA needs a re-examination of its credentials and postures.

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CSO, 3298/162

# OPPOSITION FORCES DENOUNCE GOVERNMENT POLICIES, ACTIONS

## WPA Meeting

Georgetown DAYCLEAN in English 14 Feb 87 pp 1. 2

[Text] An all-party meeting on the Walter Rodney Mall last Wednesday. February 18 gave warm support to speakers as they hit the PNC's blundering with the economy, the running down of the Guyana dollar and the long years of cover up of political violence. The 127% devaluation and the finding of the man who never lived, Sgt 4141 Gregory Smith, were the main points.

The crowd of about 600 gave rounds of applause to Mrs Pat Rodney when a speaker said that she had not rested until she dug Smith out of his hole. WPA women and Mrs Pauline Rodney, Walter's mother, were also saluted for backing the widow's call for an independent enquiry.

## Devaluation and Assassination

The all-opposition meeting organised by the WPA was chaired by Tacuma Ogunseye who warmed up the meeting with a review of the two important matters-- devaluation and the assassination of Walter Rodney.

The first speaker, brother Wendell Persaud of the Democratic Labour Movement told of how devaluation at once hit parents with children at school. He said his daughter had paid \$32.50 to write an examination. That same day she had come home with a request for \$45 more. He spoke of the People's Parade and said that he knew people were forced to march. He said it reminded him of a slave owner who made his slaves dance with his wife and daughters once a year. "But what is that march for?" he asked. "In support of what?"

Brother C. M. L. John of the People's Democratic Movement said the sale of BWIA tickets to Guyanese only in foreign currency made the Guyana dollar hopeless and useless. Guyana was taking the road of some Latin American countries in the past. He said that one hamburger now cost \$9.50--more than half the minimum wage. A half pint of ice cream cost more than \$4. Turning to the assassination of Rodney, Mr John read from a CHRONICLE of July 5, 1980. It said that the PNC had discussed at its Georgetown meeting the question of Rodney's assassination. They reported that the PNC was being accused of the killing and denied the charge. Yet though they claimed the death was an important international issue there was no inquest. He said, "To get at the



truth, they should have been happy to hold an inquest. Yet they behaved as if the Coroner's Act Chp 4:03 did not exist.' He called for respect for the laws and said "the legal machinery has been swept aside."

#### Down With Wickedness in High Places

One of the WPA speakers, Eusi Kwayana, warned that the 127% devaluation did not mean just 127% increase on goods imported at the official rate of exchange. It would mean a much higher increase when import duties and consumption taxes were added on according to the new value. On top of this the profit margin would then be added.

Turning to the other issues, the speaker said he wanted to deal with political violence in general and the assassination of Walter Rodney in particular. He told the crowd not to be confused by Smith's anti-government pose as a rebel soldier. That was how Smith was told to behave in order to worm himself into Walter Rodney's confidence and he was still playing the role. WPA had labelled him an agent and he was proving the point.

Kwayana said that it was a lucky thing that Smith had chosen to tell the lie that WPA had helped him to escape from Guyana. He said that this was the lie he could not prove before any court or enquiry; and this was the falsehood that would expose the other falsehoods.

Was it the WPA also who, as part of the deal, appointed his fiancée to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?

Brother Kwayana went over the evidence to be handed to the magistrate on February 18, saying that it was not new, but old evidence, already well known to the police. He said that it had all been printed in 1980, particularly by the CATHOLIC STANDARD. It would only now be put formally to His Worship so he could make up his mind. But on that same evidence the police had admitted on oath that they had put up photographs of Smith as a wanted man in 1980.

Kwayana asked whether WPA had also hushed up the Teekah killing and whether the only witness, a foreign woman dentist, was rushed out of the country after seeing Mr Burnham, by the WPA. He also recalled how the PNC had invited Michael X to Guyana as a guest of honour, and dropped him when the scandal of dead bodies in his yard in Trinidad broke into the news.

He warned that there would never be a clear place for the children to grow up in unless we put down wickedness in high places.

#### The Budget Is a Nightmare

Another Collymore of the PPP discussed the budget which the PPP labelled a 'nightmare.' He showed that the government's revenue after devaluation could not meet its debt payments. He argued that production was failing and no devaluation could stop that. He pointed to the many non-projects launched by the PNC government. He said that the Eclipse Mills had been 'eclipsed.' Discussing

the many price increases and the currency moves, Collymore predicted that smuggling could not be stopped in the way the government was operating.

#### Only One Cure for the Economy

Brother C. Y. Thomas of the WPA said he did not have to explain the hardships on the people, but he wanted to say that the hardships were only a first taste of what was to come in the future. He said the devaluation was very, very bad, but worse than that, he said, "When we devalued we stepped on a hidden escalator (moving steps) which would cause the exchange rate to follow the lead of the Wall Street (street market) rate. Already the commercial banks which opened the window for parallel foreign exchange transactions have increased their rates to sellers from 18-to-one to 20-to-one. This means that all the money they expected to flow to them has not been flowing."

Reminding the crowd that Guyana has about the highest rate of migration of any country in peacetime, brother Clive said: One source of demand for foreign currency is this flight of the population.... Another source of demand for foreign currency is the need for the basic goods on the parallel market.

"The escalator we stepped on will lead to an uncertain future," he said. "I expect galloping inflation to develop. Present policies will lead us to the brink when financial disintegration accompanies the political, economic and social disintegration." He loudly condemned the 'ignoramuses' who are making decisions for the future of the country. He said that the arguments in favour of devaluation had no technical support, no intellectual support and were very, very shaky. On the other hand, the argument against devaluation was very strong.

Brother Thomas ended by emphasising that the crisis was not a technical one. He said that no economist could cure it. He said that we would not have a well managed economy until we have a government that depends on the people's votes and is fully accountable to the people.

#### Multiparty Meeting

Georgetown MIRROR in English 15 Feb 87 p 1

[Text] A multi-party meeting was held on Bourda Mall last Wednesday evening, essentially to discuss two major topics with the general public...the 1987 Budget and the extradition of Gregory Smith, the man alleged to be responsible for the death of Dr Walter Rodney. There was a large turnout for the duration of the 2-1/2 hour meeting.

Speakers consisted of Wendell Persaud of the DLM; Llewellyn John of the PDN; Eusi Kwayana of the WPA; Clinton Collymore of the PPP and Dr Clive Thomas of the WPA. Chairman was Takuma Ogunsaye of the WPA.

The DLM representative made reference to the effects of the 127 per cent devaluation on exam fees for students and sharply criticised this lowering

of the value of the Guyana dollar. He urged that those citizens who are coerced into joining the 'people's parade' should register their protest in a visible way against the Budget.

The PDM representative who is an Attorney-at-Law also slammed into the devaluation, but dealt at length with the glaring failure of the PNC authorities to hold an inquest into the violent death of Walter Rodney. He accused the government of massive cover-up, and was scathingly critical of those who have the power and duty to order inquests in such cases, but failed to do so for Rodney since 1980!

Eusi Kwayana gave a thorough background to the Gregory Smith scandal, showing every inch of the way how the state authorities were clearly implicated. He deemed Smith to be still a faithful government intelligence agent, but was happy that Smith now seems to want to talk. He said that the WPA would leave no stone unturned to secure his extradition to face trial in Guyana. Mr Kwayana also made sarcastic mention of the violent death of Education Minister Teekah, the scandal of Malik--the killer from Trinidad who was embraced by the PNC. No inquest was held either!

The PPP speaker, Clinton Collymore, denounced the Budget, and completely exposed the farcical nature of the so-called 'tax relief': and the 134 per cent 'increase' in wages for some categories of workers. He referred to the tremendous wages gap, the cataclysmic fall in living standards, the on-going production fiascos, the now legalised parallel market, the up-surge in violent crime, the onerous 1987 debt burden (116.6 percent of current revenue), the shameless fuel price rip-off in 1986, the perfidious devaluation, and sharply rising prices. He criticised the TUC leadership for failing to be sufficiently alert at the negotiating table with the government and called for positive TUC measures to protect the workers from the government's onslaught.

Mr Clive Thomas, an eminent economist, gave a concise and comprehensive analysis of the government's reasons for the devaluation and tore them to shreds. He said that devaluation cannot help a country like Guyana, and would worsen the economic situation. He referred to the sharp fall in the real wages of the workers, the loss of crucial markets overseas, the endemic inefficiency and mal-administration, the appalling arrogance of those in office, and the 'escalator effect' of the devaluation on the production cost-price structure. He stressed that the party in office has lost touch with the masses.

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CSO: 3298/162

PPP ORGAN REPORTS ON WPA ACTIONS IN WALTER RODNEY CASE

Georgetown MIRROR in English 8 Feb 87 p 1

[Text] The Working People's Alliance (WPA) will re-double its efforts to ensure that former GDF Sergeant Gregory Smith is brought back to Guyana to face trial for murder. This was stressed to newsmen at a press conference on Wednesday morning last, held at WPA headquarters on Croal Street, Georgetown. Fielding the multitude of questions were Eusi Kwayana, Andaiye and Rupert Roopnarine. There was a capacity turnout of foreign and local journalists but 80 percent to 90 percent of the questions were asked by Clem David of GBC and Adam Harris of NEW NATION.

Kwayana stoutly denied that Smith was ever a member of the WPA, and asserted that it was the PNC, not the WPA, which assisted Smith in skipping the country. He further said that no one would have known of Smith's role in the assassination of Walter Rodney had the bomb killed Donald Rodney too. A spanner was thus thrown into the works when Donald Rodney escaped death, and told police that it was Smith who had given Walter Rodney the parcel which blew up.

Smith is in French Guiana (Cayenne) hiding out from the law. The PNC government and police force, it is alleged, have always known where he was. Recently, he journeyed to Suriname to have his passport (in another name which he claims is his real name) renewed. He also gave an interview to CANA, and Sharief Khan for STABROEK NEWS, on the incident, alleging that it was accidental and that it was the WPA which helped him get away.

When asked if it is not possible for Smith to be working for a foreign government, Kwayana said that he does not rule out such a possibility.

The WPA circulated a lengthy 3-page statement to the newsmen providing background information on the matter. The relevant part dealing with Smith's escape said:

'Even before Pat Rodney's disclosures the MIRROR had leaked the news that Gregory Smith was resident in Cayenne. Some time later this was confirmed by the CATHOLIC STANDARD with additional information.

What was very interesting in the revelations of Pat Rodney was the fact that Smith was able to renew his passport at the Guyana Embassy in Paramaribo in

the name of Cyril Johnson. He had not travelled to the UK for training under his name. The change of name in his travel documents therefore confirms us in the conclusion, that he left Guyana with the aid of the state and on its instructions,

We are also of the view that he had never been struck off strength from the Guyana Defence Force, but remained the faithful agent of military intelligence. Important questions may be asked: Did Smith change his identity before his flight into Cayenne?

A passport issued in 1980 would have to be renewed in 1985. Smith had his renewed in 1986. Were those who renewed the passport acting under the law? Were those who renewed the passport satisfied that they were renewing an authentic passport and not one forged, perhaps by the WPA/ If it is a fact, as a bauxite worker testified, that Smith left the country from Kwakwani on June 17, 1980, that would be enough time for him to be issued with a new identity by means of a passport in the name of Cyril Johnson. These are matters ripe for investigation.

We pour scorn on Smith's attempt to involve the WPA in his escape. We invite him to name the WPA members concerned and to give all the accompanying facts to prove his allegation designed to conceal, six years after the atrocity, his link with the PNC's death squads. Still, we welcome the fact that Smith, the man who did not exist, is available to the press and was even briefly quoted in the GUYANA CHRONICLE.

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CSO: 3298/162



# TUC OFFICIAL RULES OUT INDUSTRIAL ACTION IN WAGE ROW

Georgetown NEW NATION in English 8 Feb 87 p 8

[Text]

The second phase of renegotiation between Government and the Trades Union Congress on the 1987-88 wage package for public sector employees should resume within weeks, according to TUC President, Cde George Daniels, who was responding to questions at a press conference at the Critchlow Labour College last Wednesday.

Government and the TUC met last month following the presentation of the 1987 Budget in the National Assembly.

Cde. Daniels disregarded rumours that the TUC had been "tricked" by the Government into agreeing to the previously proposed wage package without any consideration to a devaluation of the local currency. The final decision of any national standing rests solely in the hands of the Government, he told news men.

Prior the presentation of the Budget, the two parties had agreed on a 5.5 per cent across the board wage increase package for 1987. This was to be reviewed in the event of a devaluation

of an increase in income taxes.

The TUC President acknowledged that his organisation was surprised by the devaluation, a policy that made renegotiation an urgent necessity.

The discussion between the Government and the Trades Union Congress will concentrate on formulating a programme to cushion the effects of the devaluation.

Cde. Daniels ruled out the possibility of any kind of industrial action in response to the devaluation and pledged that the TUC will continue to negotiate in good faith, in the interest of the development of the national economy.

He further disclosed that the TUC will press ahead with proposals for wide-ranging incentives for public sector workers who are working assiduously to transform the Guyanese economy.

Among the other matters agreed for the upcoming discussion are the actuary increases in National Insurance Scheme

Among the other matters agreed for the upcoming discussion are the actuary increases in National Insurance Scheme benefits and contributions, and the introduction of legislation on severance pay.

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CSO: 3298/162

**GAWU OFFICIAL CHAND TARGET OF ATTEMPTED MURDER**

Georgetown MIRROR in English 15 Feb 87 p 1

[Text]

An attempted murder of the General Secretary of GAWU, Komal Chand, took place on Wednesday Feb. 4 when armed intruders fired bullets at him in his house at La Grange, West Bank Demerara. The bullets, fired from a sawn-off shot gun, just missed him. His attackers fled, discharging two more rounds in their retreat from the scene.

Shortly before 11 pm the intruders waylaid his brother and two friends, beat them up

and locked them in a bond after failing to get them to persuade Chand to open the door to the house. There were five assailants suspected to be bandits; three wore masks.

They broke into the kitchen but could not break the door to the sleeping quarters. While attempting to open a window, in another effort to enter the building, Komal Chand and

family were awakened. He was then confronted by two men who trained a gun at him and fired. Fortunately, the shot went askew and hit the ceiling instead of the intended victim.

After the men had fled, the police, just a mere half-a-mile away, were summoned by telephone. They appeared on the scene one and a half hours later on foot!

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CSO: 3298/162

GOVERNMENT FOREIGN-EXCHANGE-EARNING INITIATIVES CITED

Georgetown NEW NATION in English 8 Feb 87 p 5

[Text]

IN presenting the 1987 Budget to the National Assembly, Senior Minister of Finance Cde Carl Greenidge identified a number of selected initiatives that were undertaken by Government to boost the development of many of the nation's foreign exchange earners during 1986.

Heading that list were marketing initiatives to increase the Guyana Rice Export Board's share of the Jamaica market to increase exports to the European Economic Community, and to explore the possibility of exporting rice to Canada under the aegis of the Caribbean agency, Caribcan.

These initiatives were highly successful in 1986. A review of the performances of the Guyana Rice Export Board (GREB) during that year revealed that the agency, which has along its objectives. The expansion of the rice export programme, had made

creditable strides during 1986.

Apart from the 31 per cent increase in exports recorded by the Board the GREB was able to raise its foreign exchange earnings from the 1985 level of \$1.75 million (US) to more than \$6 million (US) during last year.

The Board, which also bears the responsibility for conducting research and analysis pertaining to the export potential of rice further secured a three-month contract with the World Food Programme (WFP). As a result, GREB was able to supply 4106 metric tonnes of rice to Nicaragua and Honduras.

It was also able to

Operating in collaboration with the Caribbean agency, the Board continues to pursue the export possibilities for markets in Canada; one of the largest North American importers of rice.

However, the focus is on the European market.

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CSO: 3298/162

## MANLEY REPORTS ON U.S. VISIT, PROMISES CLOSER TIES

## Rejection of Drug Charges

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 28 Feb 87 p 2

[Text]

## WASHINGTON:

PNP President Michael Manley, now on a 5-day visit to Washington, said this week that Prime Minister Seaga had been trying to peddle the view to Washington that the PNP is soft on drugs including ganja.

He charged Mr. Seaga with doing so in order to persuade the U.S. Administration to support, defend and protect him, and to make the U.S. Government apprehensive about the PNP.

Mr. Manley accused Mr. Seaga of using this ploy with cynicism and with total disregard for the truth; and declared that Mr. Seaga should be ashamed of himself for resorting to such cheap and vulgar politics.

Mr. Manley was responding to a comment made by a U.P.I. journalist who said there was a view in Washington that the PNP was not fully supportive of the anti-ganja programme.

Mr. Manley responded: "It is an absolute lie".

The PNP President said Mr. Seaga was trying to project the view that ganja operators were supporting the PNP financially. He said the PNP's policy was clear in that the PNP would not knowingly accept this financial support. He pointed out that he would never lie by saying that the PNP could issue any guarantee to the world it did not receive donations from persons involved in the ganja trade, as donations came from many individuals.

He challenged Mr. Seaga to tell Washington that neither the JLP nor any member of the JLP did not

receive financial support from ganja dealers.

He related to U.P.I. some of the measures taken by the last PNP government to curb the ganja trade including the spotting of ganja fields by helicopters and burning these fields, and giving full co-operation to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

Mr. Manley held his first full day of meetings Wednesday, in talks with the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs in the Treasury Department, Mr. David Mulford; the Under Secretary for Political Affairs in the State Department, Mr. Michael Amacost and Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Michael Smith.

He was also expected to see Congressmen Mervyn Dymally, Bill Gray, Charles Rangel, Bill Leyman and Steven Solarz; as well as hold discussions with Ms. Ann Wroblewski, assistant Secretary Internal Narcotics Affairs; and Mr. Alexander Goode, CBI Ombudsman and Director General, Foreign Commercial Service.

Mr. Manley's discussions with Assistant Secretary Mulford focussed on recent developments in international financial policy with special reference to the recent Mexican and Jamaican IMF agreements. He also dealt with the mounting international debt problem and its effect on Third World economic development, particularly Jamaica.

Mr. Manley also brought Mr. Amacost up-to-date with the PNP's policy and how it was evolved. He

explained some of the strategies which would be implemented by a new PNP government to improve the Jamaican economy, and US/Jamaican relations under a PNP government.

Associated with Mr. Manley in the talks were Mr. David Coore, O.C. PNP Spokesman on Foreign Affairs and the Hon. Alfred Ramsay, O.J. PNP Spokesman on Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment.

The PNP leader was also interviewed by Christian Science Monitor TV, which is producing a half-an-hour documentary on the CBI and the political and economic situation in Jamaica. He was also interviewed by the US News Agency; U.P.I.'s Jim Anderson.

## Exoneration of Bodyguard

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 21 Feb 87 p 3

[Text]

### PORT MORANT, S.T., Feb. 20

Four of eight men charged with possession of, trafficking in and preparing ganja for export were today freed of these charges in the Morant Bay R.M. Court presided over by Mr. D.O. McKintosh after their attorneys made no-case submissions.

Freed were Detective Sergeant John O'Sullivan, attached to the Police Protective Services and a bodyguard of PNP President Michael Manley, Earl Silvester, Errol Wright and Glenroy Brown, all of Kingston. In making the ruling, Mr. McKintosh held that the prosecution had not made a *prima facie* case against the accused and the Crown had not proved that they were aiding and abetting the other four accused in an illegal act.

Allegations were that on January 12 all eight accused were seen in conversation at Springfield, St. Thomas. Four went into a truck

while the others went into a car which was later found to be driven by Sergeant O'Sullivan. The truck was seized with a load of 3,000 lb. of ganja.

First witness for the prosecution, Cpl. A. Gayle, told the court that he was on surveillance along the Rose- lle Road when he saw a truck closely followed by a blue Opel car with four occupants. The car drove alongside the truck at Springfield and both vehicles stopped. Four men came from the car and went towards the truck in which another four men were. After a conversation between all eight men both vehicles drove off with the truck following closely behind the car.

Sgt. D. Lawson, attached to the Port Morant Bay police station, told the court that he saw both the truck and the car and that on reaching a point along the Golden Grove main road the car continued straight ahead while the truck turned off along the Crocket Road.

Sgt. Michael Elliott told the court

that he was a member of a police party in a car driven by Cpl. Alfred Edwards which followed the truck along the Crocket road. He identified Mitchell, Jeffrey Rhooms, Noel Hilton and Oswald Marriott, the driver of the truck, as being the four occupants he saw in the truck. Hilton and Mitchell on the approach of the police ran from the scene. Mitchell, he said, was later discovered in the car driven by Det. Sgt. O'Sullivan which was intercepted along Leith Hall main road. Mitchell when questioned said he was only a passenger in the vehicle; he had hitched a ride and was travelling from Golden Grove.

Dr. Winston McCalla, Mr. Keith Jarrett and Mr. Hensley Williams appeared for the four accused men. Mr. Kent Pantry, Deputy Director of Public Prosecution, presented the case for the prosecution. The four other accused men, Noel Hilton, Jeffrey Rhooms, Oswald Marriott and Stanford Mitchell are to appear in court on Thursday, March 5.

## Commitment to Democracy

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 4 Mar 87 p 22

[Text]

PRESIDENT of the People's National Party, Mr. Michael Manley, last night promised closer ties with the United States if he is elected in the next general elections.

He told a cheering crowd at a rally in support of his call for elections that he had just returned from Washington where for four days he talked with "every level" of the American Government and he was happy to tell the nation that "the days of mischief are over and the days of the lies are finished."

"And I have not changed what I believe in because I always be-

lieved in freedom, I always believed in democracy, I always believed in human rights, I always believed in the rule of law, I always believed in integrity, I believed in giving justice to what people regard as their political or their religious rights, but it has been a struggle, and now the struggle is over and they can forget the propaganda.

"If it is your will that we should return to office, I can tell you that we will have co-operation and an honourable relationship with the United States," Mr. Manley said.

Mr. Manley then asked "where are we now?" and the crowd answered "We're ready." He told them that democracy was given to them

by great Jamaicans like Marcus Garvey, "and modern apostles" like Norman Manley and Sir Alexander Bustamante. This, Mr. Manley said, "we are going to defend to the end of life. The founding fathers gave us the right to look for solutions, they gave us the right to take counsel together about what we should do about the things that hurt us...they even gave us the right to be wrong."

Democracy, Mr. Manley observed, gave people the right to change if what was tried did not work "and God judge me when I think of my pupa, when I think of all the people who have suffered and given up their lives for that thing, it is one thing that burns inside this heart, is that we never



gwine lose that right in Jamaica."

Recalling his eight year term which ended in 1980, The PNP president pointed out that, "Farmers got land they had never dreamed of before, children got opportunities that they had never dreamed of before, women attained justice they had never attained before."

The PNP did all it could with all sincerity, but obstacles were created by the oil price increase and foreign exchange problems.

"We had to face things that no Third World government had ever faced before. We have made mistakes, things were not done sometimes as well as they might have been done, but we did many things, and above all we worked, and above all we were honest,

above all we were true, and above all nobody could bribe us, and nobody was putting away secret money anywhere; but the time came when the people in their wisdom decided we need a rest and they gave me the biggest political defeat ever seen." The rest, Mr. Manley said, he took without fuss "and as a democrat, no hurt." But he said he was now ready to go back to work.

Commenting on the Government's refusal to call elections now, Mr. Manley said "Hurry Come Up", "Hurry Come Up", "Hurry Come Up", him seh him no wan go down but him have fi go down, him have fi go down."

He said that for six years and four months Jamaica had no chance to choose a government

"Manley and Bustamante said five years, now 'Hurry Come Up' say him want eight years."

Commenting on tourism, Mr. Manley said harassment and drug pushing were serious problems affecting the trade and warned "If you put me there I am coming for the harassers."

There was no applause following that announcement and Mr. Manley said, "A surprise you with that, surprise you, but I am a man, I tell you before, I don't tell you after, so if you don't want to vote for me don't vote. And I advice the drug pushers don't vote for Michael Manley for I gwine push you out and who taking bribe to survive, you know a gwine find them out."

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CSO: 3298/163

## STONE POLLS SHOW MANLEY, PNP LEAD OVER SEAGA, JLP

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 23, 24 Feb 87 p 3

[Carl Stone polls]

[Text] The January 1987 Stone Poll was carried out between January 9th to 12th under the supervision of political scientist Professor Carl Stone, Ph.D. C.D. The Stone Poll covered 1,206 voters interviewed in 68 communities in all parishes across the island. The estimated sample error is plus or minus 4%.

56% Say Manley Would Do a Better Job

**Would Mr. Manley be able to do a better job of running the country than Mr. Seaga? According to the recent Stone Poll, 56% of the Jamaican voters thinks so while 28% disagree and 18% are not sure one way or the other.**

Faith in Mr. Manley's ability to do a better job of running the country than Mr. Seaga is stronger among the poorer classes than among the middle class.

In this January 1987 Stone Poll 55% of Jamaicans expressed the view that the Prime Minister was doing a poor job. It should be

noted, however that the survey was done on the week-end preceeding Mr. Seaga's report on the new IMF agreement. Only 10% said that Mr. Seaga was doing a good job while 35% felt that he was trying his best.

Overall, therefore, Mr. Seaga received a 45% positive rating on his leadership as Prime Minister and a 55% negative rating.

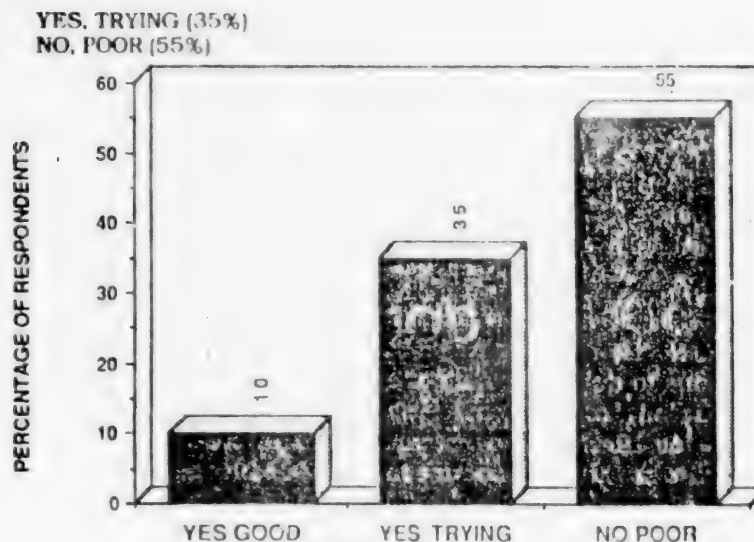
A comparison with earlier polls show the following results.

Rating of Mr. Seaga as Prime Minister		
	Positive rating (good or trying)	negative rating (poor job)
1983	61%	39%
1984	62%	38%
1985	50%	50%
1986	54%	46%
1987	45%	55%

Positive rating of Mr. Seaga's leadership has dropped by some 20% since 1983.

**QUESTION:**

Is Mr. Seaga doing a good job of running the country?  
YES, GOOD (10%)



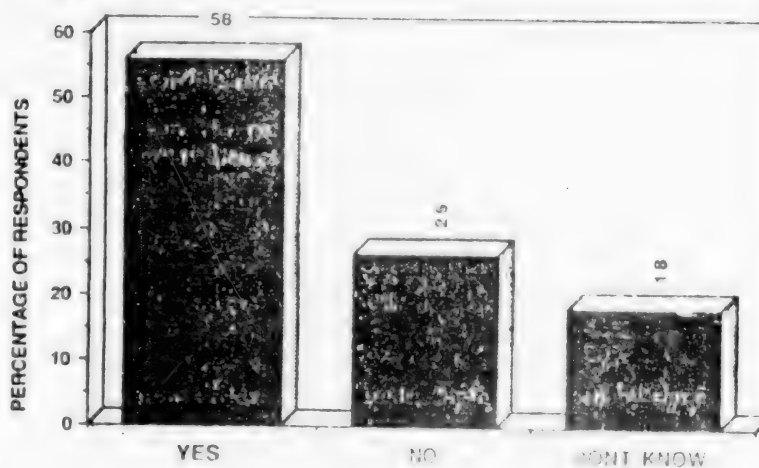
#### QUESTION:

Would Mr. Manley do a better job?

YES (56%)

NO (26%)

DON'T KNOW (18%)



### PNP Maintains Big Majority

The January 1987 Stone Poll confirmed that the majority voter support that swept the PNP into victory in 12 out of 13 parish contests in the recent July 1986 Local Government elections has been maintained.

Contrary to speculation inside both JLP and PNP circles, the Stone Poll shows PNP popular support standing at 48% compared to 49% in the July 1986 Stone Poll and JLP popular support standing at 32% compared to a similar 32% in the July 1986 Stone Poll.

In the sample of persons interviewed for this poll 57.6% voted PNP in the parish elections (among those who voted) and

58.8% voted JLP in 1980.

This popular vote level amounts to a 60% level of support for the PNP if a parliamentary election were held now and a 40% vote for the JLP.

WPJ support fell from 1% to 0.5%.

To facilitate comparison with earlier polls we give the poll results for the last poll done in each year since 1976.

Comparison with last poll done in earlier years

	PNP	JLP	Uncommitted
1976	48%	37%	15%
1977	39%	36%	35%
1978	29%	33%	38%
1979	37%	47%	16%
1980	37%	50%	13%
1981	30%	36%	33%
1982	43%	38%	19%
1983	38%	43%	19%
1984	38%	26%	34%
1985	48%	27%	21%
1986	49%	32%	18%
1987	48%	32%	19%

(Support for the WPJ which is not listed can be computed by adding PNP, JLP and uncommitted and subtracting from 100%)

### Question:

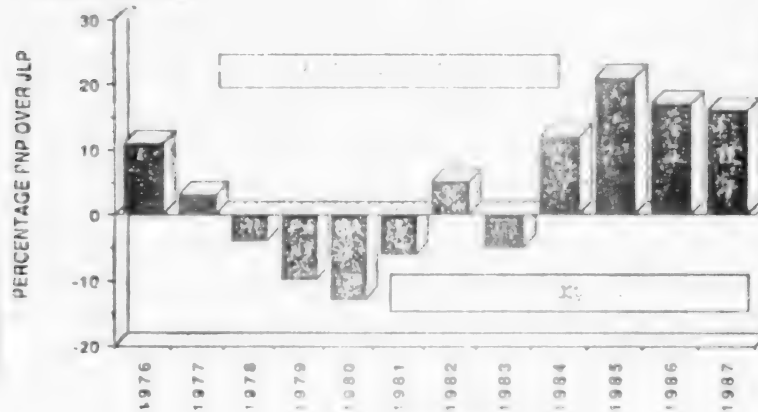
Which party would you vote for now?

PNP (48%)

JLP (32%)

WPJ (0.5%)

NONE (19.5%)



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CS0: 3298/163

## WORKERS PARTY OFFICIAL ADDRESSES ELECTION INQUIRY UNIT

Kingston THE DAILY CLEANER in English 21 Feb 87 p 22

[Text]

The Workers' Party of Jamaica (WPJ) through Mr. John Haughton, caretaker for South West St. Andrew, on Wednesday made wide-ranging recommendations to the Election Inquiry on ways in which the country's electoral machinery could be strengthened.

He said the party feels that voters should be given the right to recall politicians they elected, before the stipulated election, if they failed to perform.

Mr. Haughton said that one of the "severe weaknesses" in the electoral system was the degree of tribalism or partisanship which now exists. He said the extent of electoral malpractices was much greater in the urban areas than in rural Jamaica.

Mr. Haughton is the first WPJ witness to testify before the Commission of Inquiry set up to probe malpractices during last year's Local Government Election.

The first public sitting was held in October last year and the Commission had its 34th sitting on Wednesday.

The police, he said, did their best to provide security in South West St. Andrew during the election "under extraordinary difficulties."

However, Mr. Haughton charged that individual policemen acted "in a partisan manner."

He referred to 'one-day policemen,' appointed to provide security at polling stations with regular policemen, as being "bogus."

The WPJ sees the need for reform of the electoral laws in roughly five areas, he said, explaining that this reform "would improve democracy and ensure the democratization of the electoral system."

Dealing with the areas which needed changes, he said the system of proportional representation should be introduced into Jamaica, and the present system of "first past the post" phased out. "The system of proportional representation would help to ensure that the results of the election are in keeping with the wishes of the people," he told the Commission.

Voters should be given the right to recall Members of Parliament and Councillors who fail to perform "before the stipulated election," he said. This would not lead to instability in the electoral system, but rather it would ensure performance from elected politicians.

Also, Mr. Haughton said, bona-fide political parties should be given

full and equal status in the electoral system.

He said that currently there was discrimination against third parties in the appointment of scrutineers, the appointment of representatives on the Electoral Advisory Committee and the right to have an observer at the printing of ballots.

The witness said his party felt that there should be legislation which would make it compulsory for political parties to disclose the source of their funding, and to prohibit foreign corporations and financial institutions from interfering in the electoral affairs of Jamaica.

Also, he told the Commission that there was need for a law "to allow for a provision whereby a portion of public funds can be allocated to bona-fide political parties in the conduct of an election campaign."

He said it was the party's view that there should be a "substantial increase" in the budget of the Electoral Office to enable improvement in the size and quality of electoral field staff, and to improve technical capabilities.

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CSO: 3298/163



## GOVERNMENT MEETS EXPENSES, LEAVES BUDGET SURPLUS

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 25 Feb 87 pp 1, 3

[Text]

**F**OR THE FIRST TIME in 11 years the Government of Jamaica has financed its operational expenses entirely out of revenue and left a healthy surplus to help fund capital expenses.

This was stated by Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning Edward Seaga in the House of Representatives yesterday when he sought approval for the First Supplementary Estimates.

Further, Mr. Seaga told Members that the target of reducing the fiscal deficit to 4.9 percent of Gross Domestic Product had been surpassed and the fiscal deficit was now at a sustainable level of three percent of GDP.

He said that originally the estimates for current receipts had been set at \$ 4.068 million but that the out-turn was now \$ 4,373.8 million, an increase of \$ 305 million. In terms of current expenditures Mr. Seaga said the total projected was \$ 3,576 million. The estimated final figure at the close of the year in a few weeks time, he said was \$ 3,784.7 million which would net an increase in the budget of \$ 97 million.

Mr. Seaga said that the total financing for the financial year was \$ 4,724 million with a final out-turn of \$ 4,802 million a variance of 1.6 percent. The Government, he said, had managed the inflows and the expenditures. It was false, he said, to suggest as a Gleaner editorial did, that the Government was in

a restrictionist mode rather than an expansionist one, as expenditure had been increased.

He said that income tax inflows had been increased by \$ 135 million to \$ 1,490 million despite last year's substantial reduction in income tax rates.

Touching on Property Tax, Mr. Seaga said that there were 577,000 parcels of land individually owned. Of that amount 232,000 paid a flat rate of \$ 5; 225,000 paid up to \$ 65; 55,000 paid up to \$ 155; 25,000 paid up to \$ 312; 25,000 paid up to \$ 812 while 9,000 paid up to \$1,937 and another 6,000 paid more than that.

The Prime Minister said that it was among the 15,000 at the top where the problems were to be found, and he reminded members that there were several mechanisms which could be used to get relief where that relief was warranted. He distributed to members a pamphlet which outlined the methods of seeking relief as well as various forms which should be filled out when seeking such relief.

At the present time, he said, there were 1,621 objections being studied, and he himself had exercised his discretion on a daily basis

where appeals were made to him. There was no reason to seek to alarm people, he said.

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CSO: 3298/163

FORMAL PROTEST TO VENEZUELA OVER FISHING INCIDENT

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 1

[Article by Anthony Milne]

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Consalvi "lamented the report" of the attack during the meeting with Ambassador Thomas, the release said, and promised a special investigation into the matter. Results of the investigation, together with recommendations for follow-up action, are to be forwarded to Ambassador Thomas.

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## SITUATION INVOLVING FOREIGN LOANS MARKING SUCCESSES

### Dookeran Report

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 pp 1, 2

[Article by Ria Taitt]

[Text]

**GOVERNMENT** has completed a successful first round of negotiations on its overseas borrowing programme with TT\$382 million already secured for several important development projects, Planning and Reconstruction Minister, Winston Dookeran disclosed yesterday.

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The finalisation of this loan was virtually complete, he said, adding that contractors have been pre-qualified and a short list prepared on the basis of which tenders for construction work is to be invited.

Government had also re-negotiated a US\$36 million loan with that same body for the construction of a learning resource centre and 24 primary schools. This

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The Minister of Finance and Planning also disclosed that discussions with the European Development Fund revealed that Trinidad and Tobago had some TT\$74 million, gathered between 1985 and now from Lome 1, 2 and 3, which have not yet being used.

This source of funding will be utilised for the implementation of pro-

jects in the areas of agricultural development, conservation of natural resources and human resource development.

Dookeran added that the World Bank was willing to give technical co-operation in several areas, but held to its view that the prime criteria for concessionary funding should be the per capita income of a country.

Dookeran stressed that the Government loan bid did not mean a

high debt repayment schedule. "That is part of our concern," he said, "that we do not generate a high debt situation that we cannot in the future service."

He emphasised that concessionary lending, based on long term repayment and low interest rates, were the key factors in the Government's borrowing thrust.

Dookeran also met with the International Finance Corporation, an affiliate of the World Bank.

### Request to IADB

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 27 Feb 87 p 6

[Text]

**THE** Government has requested funds from the Inter-American Development Bank for a number of projects to be undertaken by the Water and Sewerage Authority.

Minister of Finance and Planning Winston Dookeran told a press conference on Wednesday that 1988 was the target for this project. Speaking after his return from a finance-finding assignment in Washington DC, Dookeran said an orientation mission was expected in Trinidad and Tobago during the first week of March in connection with this project.

Dookeran said he, along with Knowlson Gift, Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner to Jamaica and O'Neil Lewis, Trinidad and Tobago's Ambassador to the United States of America, met with the committee of the board of governors of the Inter-American Bank between January 17 and 20. The meeting was a follow-up on discussions pertaining principally to the Seventh Replenishment of Resources for the Inter-American Development Bank.

These discussions had been taking place over the last 14 months and Trinidad and Tobago's participation has been critical because this country represents not only its own interests on the committee but also those of the English-speaking Caribbean member countries of the bank, Dookeran said.

Among the important aspects of the discussion is the size of the bank's lending programme to be

implemented between 1987 and 1990. Dookeran said: "In this regard it should be noted that Trinidad and Tobago has only recently recommenced negotiations for loans from this insti-

tution after a period of some ten years.

"The successful outcome of the discussions on the 7th Replenishment, in a large measure, will determine the extent of access that this country and other borrowing member countries will have a major source of concessionary lending for economic and social development."

He added that some questions remained unresolved at the end of the meeting and it was decided outstanding issues would be taken up at a meeting in March.

During the delegation's stay in Washington, they also discussed with the Organisation of American States two projects relating to the establishment and management of a system of national parks and other protected areas.

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CSO: 3298/164



# COLA ISSUE REMAINS SORE POINT; MORE PAYMENTS HALTED

## Company Actions

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 2

[Text]

**MONTHLY** rated workers of Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (TTEC) were paid minus Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) yesterday.

It is understood that following the development, several affected workers met with officials of the Oilfields Workers Trade Union (OWTU), bargaining unit for the employees.

According to OWTU official Alva Allen, the union met with Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson on the matter last Tuesday and was told that the Government had no choice but to ask the employed to bear the burden of adjustment. However, Allen said the union intends to take legal action against the management of the Commission for illegally suspending a provision of the collective

agreement.

The weekly-paid workers are expected to be paid today and it is understood that they too are to have their COLA suspended.

Meanwhile, Trinidad and Tobago Telephone Company (TELCO) pub-

lic relations manager Neil Guiseppi yesterday denied that a decision had been taken by TELCO's management to suspend the Allowance.

He said he was also unaware of any discussion by the board on the matter and he was

not in a position to speculate on what decision the new executive (soon to be announced) will wish to take on the issue of COLA.

The TELCO board held its regular monthly meeting yesterday.

However, Commu-

nication Workers Union (CWU) general secretary Lyle Townsend said the suspension of COLA at TELCO was "imminent" and that he was aware of plans to take the step.

TELCO workers received their salaries. COLA included, yesterday.

## Union Protest

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 5 Mar 87 p 3

[Text]

THE COUNCIL of Progressive Trade Unions (CPTU) has protested the implementation of an order to stop the payment of Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) while discussions are being held between the Government, the Joint Negotiating Team of public sector unions and the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union on the matter.

The removal of COLA, said the

CPTU, "has already created serious hardships for T&TEC workers and all others in the public sector."

It said this was moreso since several T&TEC workers had complained that they had received no take-home pay since COLA was removed last Thursday. The CPTU has also called for the "unconditional restoration of COLA."

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CSO: 3298/164

UNION URGES PUNITIVE STEPS AGAINST EMPLOYER ACTIONS

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 5 Mar 87 p 5

[Text]

**THE Council of Progressive Trade Unions (CPTU) has called for more punitive measures against employers for the violation of collective agreements and wrongful dismissals.**

In a letter to Labour, Employment and Manpower Resources Minister Dr Albert Richards, the trade union grouping said an end must be put to the "hostile and belligerent attitude of employers."

This, the CPTU said, should be done since, "no amount of costs and no amount of further recommendations could deal with the cumulative effect" of employers' attitude to industrial relations.

The CPTU added that the issue of the backlog of cases at the Industrial Court should be dealt with and it blamed businesses for the situation. It said there were 536 outstanding matters at the Court at the end of last year,

while at the end of 1985 there were 259 such cases.

The council charged that the backlog of cases was "only one manifestation of the employers' attitude" which included lock-outs, of which there were 17 last year, and receiverships, of which there were 12.

According to the CPTU, the situation was "compounded by the fact that the previous directorate did not treat the court with the importance it deserved." It said such a situation was responsible for the problems experienced by the court in areas such as staffing and air-conditioning.

The CPTU proposed that additional courts be set up in Port of Spain and in south Trinidad. It called for the employment of additional judges and support staff and speedy delivery of judgments in connection with wage disputes, retrenchment and severance pay benefits.

The Council said there were 95 matters involving retrenchment and severance pay at the Industrial Court last year.

The grouping called for "immediate judgments" on long outstanding trade disputes, some of which, it said, went as far back as 1967. It added that the issue of the appointment of judges be regularised.

It also said steps should be taken to remove the "highly legalistic approach by employers in industrial relations."

According to the CPTU, the laws governing the recognition of trade unions should be amended so that non-unionised workers would have the right to representation in cases of dismissals.

It also asked the Minister to look into the plugging of what it considered to be loopholes in the Retrenchment and Severance Benefits Act.

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CSO: 3298/164

ROBINSON: STRONG NAR NEEDED TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT

Port.of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 27 Feb 87 p 5

[Text]

**THE NATIONAL Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) is in the process of discovering the nature of the daunting task ahead as it seeks to reconstruct the society and restructure the economy.**

This was stated by NAR political leader and Prime Minister A. N. R. Robinson in his message on the occasion of the first anniversary of the NAR on Monday at the Seamen and Waterfront Workers Trade Union.

Robinson said the Government's reconstruction mission must be supported by a strong and vibrant party organisation. "We must put down deep and permanent roots in the communities throughout the land — constituency groups, the national council, the executive, the secretariat, must flourish and remain ac-

tive."

Robinson said lines of communication must be developed and strengthened from the membership right up through the front-line leadership and back down again.

"There must be constant dialogue between government and party, and the party must take on a healthy and vigorous life of its own. The party must grapple with the various issues of the day and make its voice known to the leadership, it must express its collective will and offer

guidance and support and, when necessary, constructive criticism to the leadership."

Robinson said that the party over the last two years could feel a proud sense of achievement since it had routed its political foes, and after two months in office had taken significant steps to act on the agenda and fulfil the pledges it set out in its manifesto.

He said the nation rejoiced with the NAR "in a new dawn. Never before have we been so united, so filled with a

sense of communion and community. A new spirit of patriotism and national pride has filled the land.

"We feel justifiably proud of our rich and creative culture and our heritage in this season of national festivity, a festival of music, song and dance without parallel anywhere in the world."

Stating that nothing was impossible in an environment of cultural and spiritual resurgence, he called for renewed determination from the party in the task of "the great enterprise of nation building."

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CSO: 3298/164

## DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING OIL, GAS INDUSTRIES, EXPLOITATION

### Gas-Reserves Development

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 2 Mar 87 p 3

[Text]

THE gas reserves off the south east coast of this country will cost over \$1 billion to develop, according to an evaluation conducted on the South East Coast Consortium (SECC).

And Government is currently evaluating two firm proposals for the establishment of urea and ammonia plants which could use the gas generated from SECC.

This was disclosed by Energy Minister Kelvin Ramnath in an address to the South Trinidad Chamber of Industry and Commerce on Thursday night at the Cross Crossing Complex. The meeting was chaired by Chamber president, Peter Quentrall-Thomas.

The Minister said SECC had reached an advanced stage and the Government was "fully satisfied with the technical evaluation of the project." SECC is a consortium with Trintoc and Trintopec to develop the gas reserves on the east coast. The Minister said this would involve substantial investment by

the Government through Trintopec and Trintoc.

Said Ramnath: "You will understand, therefore, that we need to be fully convinced about the economics of such a project since we would not wish to be saddled with any more white elephants." He said SECC is being reviewed by a team "which is looking not simply at SECC in the narrow micro sense, but in terms of the wider and more important macro economics and planning."

Ramnath said two major guidelines will underscore the review of the proposals. These are:

- that in our current circumstances, any capital outlay by Government be kept to a minimum or obviated all together, and

- that the overseas partners bring to the project established and recognised expertise, technology and resources such as marketing opportunities.

Ramnath said in the case of one of the proposed plans, Point Fortin has been identified as the location.

### Energy Ministry Responsibilities

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 2 Mar 87 p 5

[Text]

THE two major state-owned oil companies as well as all other state enterprises in the energy sector will now fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Energy.

The energy sector companies have been de-linked from the Ministry of Industry and Enterprises, representing a major departure from what had obtained previously.

This was disclosed by Energy Minister Kelvin Ramnath on Thursday night in an address to the general meeting of the South Trinidad Chamber of

Industry and Commerce. The meeting was presided over by the president, Peter Quentrall-Thomas.

This meeting was attended by Trintoc chairman Willfred Andrew Rose, Trintoc's Managing Director Walton James, Trintopec chairman Hamil Legall, Trintopec General Manager Leonard Lewis, Trinmar General Manager Ken Birchwood among others.

Ramnath described the move as a "fundamental and significant decision," taken by the Government to facilitate the new thrust in a restructured Ministry of Energy. Said he: "State enterprises in the energy sector are now accountable to my Ministry. This represents a fundamental and positive change and would remove the conflict which was evident in the past."

Said Ramnath: "The Ministry of Energy will therefore not only continue to perform the vital function of being a regulatory agency for the energy companies but as well, will have the responsibility of supervising and providing direction to the business and the development of our state corporations engaged in this field."

Ramnath said his Ministry will work closely with the Ministry of Reconstruction and Planning which is responsible for overall national planning. Energy companies, he said, will be expected to perform at the highest level of efficiency and productivity. He said these companies will have to follow stringent guidelines which have been established for all state enterprises.

Ramnath said Government was satisfied that the new role of the Ministry of Energy was critical in achieving optimum development of the energy sector. This was necessary, he said, if the country was to receive the full benefit of the tremendous investment in the energy and energy-based industries.

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CSO: 3298/164



BRIEFS

GRENADA-GOODS PRICES--St George's, Wednesday (CANA)--Grenada's Prime Minister Herbert Blaize says the recent abolition of the dual-exchange rate by Trinidad and Tobago would have some impact on trade between the two countries. Speaking in Parliament, Blaize said that under the new rate Trinidadian importers would have to pay more for goods, resulting in more TT dollars for Grenadian suppliers who sell vegetables and fresh fruit. 'Whereas EC\$1,000 worth of goods shipped at the old exchange rates would cost a Trinidadian importer approximately TT\$885, excluding shipping and port charges, under the new rate, the cost would now be TT\$1,333. He is concerned, however, that Port of Spain's plans to diversify and expand its agricultural base would mean less business for Grenadian traders. Blaize said the inevitable result would be that consumers in Trinidad and Tobago would have to pay higher prices for local produce. "Grenadian exports of those commodities had cornered a portion of that market in the light of little domestic production; available local supplies in the near future will erode the inelasticity of demand imports previously enjoyed," he said. Blaize said Grenadian producers would have to reduce their export prices as well as seek alternative markets. [Text] [Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 2] /9274

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18 May 87

## WORKERS PARTY OFFICIAL ADDRESSES ELECTION INQUIRY UNIT

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 21 Feb 87 p 22

[Text]

The Workers' Party of Jamaica (WPJ) through Mr. John Haughton, caretaker for South West St. Andrew, on Wednesday made wide-ranging recommendations to the Election Inquiry on ways in which the country's electoral machinery could be strengthened.

He said the party feels that voters should be given the right to recall politicians they elected, before the stipulated election, if they failed to perform.

Mr. Haughton said that one of the "severe weaknesses" in the electoral system was the degree of tribalism or partisanship which now exists. He said the extent of electoral malpractices was much greater in the urban areas than in rural Jamaica.

Mr. Haughton is the first WPJ witness to testify before the Commission of Inquiry set up to probe malpractices during last year's Local Government Election.

The first public sitting was held in October last year and the Commission had its 34th sitting on Wednesday.

The police, he said, did their best to provide security in South West St. Andrew during the election "under extraordinary difficulties."

However, Mr. Haughton charged that individual policemen acted "in a partisan manner."

He referred to 'one-day policemen,' appointed to provide security at polling stations with regular policemen, as being "bogus."

The WPJ sees the need for reform of the electoral laws in roughly five areas, he said, explaining that this reform "would improve democracy and ensure the democratization of the electoral system."

Dealing with the areas which needed changes, he said the system of proportional representation should be introduced into Jamaica, and the present system of "first past the post" phased out. "The system of proportional representation would help to ensure that the results of the election are in keeping with the wishes of the people," he told the Commission.

Voters should be given the right to recall Members of Parliament and Councillors who fail to perform "before the stipulated election," he said. This would not lead to instability in the electoral system, but rather it would ensure performance from elected politicians.

Also, Mr. Haughton said, bona-fide political parties should be given

full and equal status in the electoral system.

He said that currently there was discrimination against third parties in the appointment of scrutineers, the appointment of representatives on the Electoral Advisory Committee and the right to have an observer at the printing of ballots.

The witness said his party felt that there should be legislation which would make it compulsory for political parties to disclose the source of their funding, and to prohibit foreign corporations and financial institutions from interfering in the electoral affairs of Jamaica.

Also, he told the Commission that there was need for a law "to allow for a provision whereby a portion of public funds can be allocated to bona-fide political parties in the conduct of an election campaign."

He said it was the party's view that there should be a "substantial increase" in the budget of the Electoral Office to enable improvement in the size and quality of electoral field staff, and to improve technical capabilities.

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CSO: 3298/163

## GOVERNMENT MEETS EXPENSES, LEAVES BUDGET SURPLUS

Kingston THE DAILY GLEANER in English 25 Feb 87 pp 1, 3

[Text]

**F**OR THE FIRST TIME in 11 years the Government of Jamaica has financed its operational expenses entirely out of revenue and left a healthy surplus to help fund capital expenses.

This was stated by Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning Edward Seaga in the House of Representatives yesterday when he sought approval for the First Supplementary Estimates.

Further, Mr. Seaga told Members that the target of reducing the fiscal deficit to 4.9 percent of Gross Domestic Product had been surpassed and the fiscal deficit was now at a sustainable level of three percent of GDP.

He said that originally the estimates for current receipts had been set at \$ 4,068 million but that the out-turn was now \$ 4,373.8 million, an increase of \$ 305 million. In terms of current expenditures Mr. Seaga said the total projected was \$ 3,576 million. The estimated final figure at the close of the year in a few weeks time, he said was \$ 3,784.7 million which would net an increase in the budget of \$ 97 million.

Mr. Seaga said that the total financing for the financial year was \$ 4,724 million with a final out-turn of \$ 4,802 million a variance of 1.6 percent. The Government, he said, had managed the inflows and the expenditures. It was false, he said, to suggest as a Gleaner editorial did, that the Government was in

a restrictionist mode rather than an expansionist one, as expenditure had been increased.

He said that income tax inflows had been increased by \$ 135 million to \$ 1,490 million despite last year's substantial reduction in income tax rates.

Touching on Property Tax, Mr. Seaga said that there were 577,000 parcels of land individually owned. Of that amount 232,000 paid a flat rate of \$ 5; 225,000 paid up to \$ 65; 55,000 paid up to \$ 155; 25,000 paid up to \$ 312; 25,000 paid up to \$ 812 while 9,000 paid up to \$1,937 and another 6,000 paid more than that.

The Prime Minister said that it was among the 15,000 at the top where the problems were to be found, and he reminded members that there were several mechanisms which could be used to get relief where that relief was warranted. He distributed to members a pamphlet which outlined the methods of seeking relief as well as various forms which should be filled out when seeking such relief.

At the present time, he said, there were 1,621 objections being studied, and he himself had exercised his discretion on a daily basis

where appeals were made to him. There was no reason to seek to alarm people, he said.

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Dookeran added that the World Bank was willing to give technical co-operation in several areas, but held to its view that the prime criteria for concessionary funding should be the per capita income of a country.

Dookeran stressed that the Government loan bid did not mean a

high debt repayment schedule. "That is part of our concern," he said, "that we do not generate a high debt situation that we cannot in the future service."

He emphasised that concessionary lending, based on long term repayment and low interest rates, were the key factors in the Government's borrowing thrust.

Dookeran also met with the International Finance Corporation, an affiliate of the World Bank

## Request to IADB

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 27 Feb 87 p 6

[Text]

**THE Government has requested funds from the Inter-American Development Bank for a number of projects to be undertaken by the Water and Sewerage Authority.**

Minister of Finance and Planning Winston Dookeran told a press conference on Wednesday that 1988 was the target for this project. Speaking after his return from a finance-finding assignment in Washington DC, Dookeran said an orientation mission was expected in Trinidad and Tobago during the first week of March in connection with this project.

Dookeran said he, along with Knowlson Gift, Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner to Jamaica and O'Neil Lewis, Trinidad and Tobago's Ambassador to the United States of America, met with the committee of the board of governors of the Inter-American Bank between January 17 and 20. The meeting was a follow-up on discussions pertaining principally to the Seventh Replenishment of Resources for the Inter-American Development Bank.

These discussions had been taking place over the last 14 months and Trinidad and Tobago's participation has been critical because this country represents not only its own interests on the committee but also those of the English-speaking Caribbean member countries of the bank, Dookeran said.

Among the important aspects of the discussion is the size of the bank's lending programme to be

implemented between 1987 and 1990. Dookeran said: "In this regard it should be noted that Trinidad and Tobago has only recently recommenced negotiations for loans from this insti-

tution after a period of some ten years.

"The successful outcome of the discussions on the 7th Replenishment, in a large measure, will determine the extent of access that this country and other borrowing member countries will have a major source of concessionary lending for economic and social development."

He added that some questions remained unresolved at the end of the meeting and it was decided outstanding issues would be taken up at a meeting in March.

During the delegation's stay in Washington, they also discussed with the Organisation of American States two projects relating to the establishment and management of a system of national parks and other protected areas.

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COLA ISSUE REMAINS SORE POINT; MORE PAYMENTS HALTED

Company Actions

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 2

[Text]

**MONTHLY** rated workers of Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (TTEC) were paid minus Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) yesterday.

It is understood that following the development, several affected workers met with officials of the Oilfields Workers Trade Union (OWTU), bargaining unit for the employees.

According to OWTU official Alva Allen, the union met with Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson on the matter last Tuesday and was told that the Government had no choice but to ask the employed to bear the burden of adjustment. However, Allen said the union intends to take legal action against the management of the Commission for illegally suspending a provision of the collective

agreement.

The weekly-paid workers are expected to be paid today and it is understood that they too are to have their COLA suspended.

Meanwhile, Trinidad and Tobago Telephone Company (TELCO) pub-

lic relations manager Neil Guiseppi yesterday denied that a decision had been taken by TELCO's management to suspend the Allowance.

He said he was also unaware of any discussion by the board on the matter and he was

not in a position to speculate on what decision the new executive (soon to be announced) will wish to take on the issue of COLA.

The TELCO board held its regular monthly meeting yesterday.

However, Commu-

nication Workers Union (CWU) general secretary Lyle Townsend said the suspension of COLA at TELCO was "imminent" and that he was aware of plans to take the step.

TELCO workers received their salaries, COLA included, yesterday.

Union Protest

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 5 Mar 87 p 3

[Text]

THE COUNCIL of Progressive Trade Unions (CPTU) has protested the implementation of an order to stop the payment of Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) while discussions are being held between the Government, the Joint Negotiating Team of public sector unions and the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union on the matter.

The removal of COLA, said the

CPTU, "has already created serious hardships for T&TEC workers and all others in the public sector."

It said this was moreso since several T&TEC workers had complained that they had received no take-home pay since COLA was removed last Thursday. The CPTU has also called for the "unconditional restoration of COLA."

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UNION URGES PUNITIVE STEPS AGAINST EMPLOYER ACTIONS

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 5 Mar 87 p 5

[Text]

**THE Council of Progressive Trade Unions (CPTU) has called for more punitive measures against employers for the violation of collective agreements and wrongful dismissals.**

In a letter to Labour, Employment and Manpower Resources Minister Dr Albert Richards, the trade union grouping said an end must be put to the "hostile and beligerent attitude of employers."

This, the CPTU said, should be done since, "no amount of costs and no amount of further recommendations could deal with the cumulative effect" of employers' attitude to industrial relations.

The CPTU added that the issue of the backlog of cases at the Industrial Court should be dealt with and it blamed businesses for the situation. It said there were 536 outstanding matters at the Court at the end of last year,

while at the end of 1985 there were 259 such cases.

The council charged that the backlog of cases was "only one manifestation of the employers' attitude" which included lock-outs, of which there were 17 last year, and receiverships, of which there were 12.

According to the CPTU, the situation was "compounded by the fact that the previous directorate did not treat the court with the importance it deserved." It said such a situation was responsible for the problems experienced by the court in areas such as staffing and air-conditioning.

The CPTU proposed that additional courts be set up in Port of Spain and in south Trinidad. It called for the employment of additional judges and support staff and speedy delivery of judgments in connection with wage disputes, retrenchment and severance pay benefits.

The Council said there were 95 matters involving retrenchment and severance pay at the Industrial Court last year.

The grouping called for "immediate judgments" on long outstanding trade disputes, some of which, it said, went as far back as 1967. It added that the issue of the appointment of judges be regularised.

It also said steps should be taken to remove the "highly legalistic approach by employers in industrial relations."

According to the CPTU, the laws governing the recognition of trade unions should be amended so that non-unionised workers would have the right to representation in cases of dismissals.

It also asked the Minister to look into the plugging of what it considered to be loopholes in the Retrenchment and Severance Benefits Act.

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ROBINSON: STRONG NAR NEEDED TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 27 Feb 87 p 5

[Text]

**THE NATIONAL Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) is in the process of discovering the nature of the daunting task ahead as it seeks to reconstruct the society and restructure the economy.**

This was stated by NAR political leader and Prime Minister A. N. R. Robinson in his message on the occasion of the first anniversary of the NAR on Monday at the Seamen and Waterfront Workers Trade Union.

Robinson said the Government's reconstruction mission must be supported by a strong and vibrant party organisation. "We must put down deep and permanent roots in the communities throughout the land — constituency groups, the national council, the executive, the secretariat, must flourish and remain ac-

tive."

Robinson said lines of communication must be developed and strengthened from the membership right up through the front-line leadership and back down again.

"There must be constant dialogue between government and party, and the party must take on a healthy and vigorous life of its own. The party must grapple with the various issues of the day and make its voice known to the leadership. It must express its collective will and offer

guidance and support and, when necessary, constructive criticism to the leadership."

Robinson said that the party over the last two years could feel a proud sense of achievement since it had routed its political foes, and after two months in office had taken significant steps to act on the agenda and fulfil the pledges it set out in its manifesto.

He said the nation rejoiced with the NAR "in a new dawn. Never before have we been so united, so filled with a

sense of communion and community. A new spirit of patriotism and national pride has filled the land.

"We feel justifiably proud of our rich and creative culture and our heritage in this season of national festivity, a festival of music, song and dance without parallel anywhere in the world."

Stating that nothing was impossible in an environment of cultural and spiritual resurgence, he called for renewed determination from the party in the task of "the great enterprise of nation building."

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DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING OIL, GAS INDUSTRIES, EXPLOITATION

Gas-Reserves Development

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 2 Mar 87 p 3

[Text]

**THE** gas reserves off the south east coast of this country will cost over \$1 billion to develop, according to an evaluation conducted on the South East Coast Consortium (SECC).

And Government is currently evaluating two firm proposals for the establishment of urea and ammonia plants which could use the gas generated from SECC.

This was disclosed by Energy Minister Kelvin Ramnath in an address to the South Trinidad Chamber of Industry and Commerce on Thursday night at the Cross Crossing Complex. The meeting was chaired by Chamber president, Peter Quentrall-Thomas.

The Minister said SECC had reached an advanced stage and the Government was "fully satisfied with the technical evaluation of the project." SECC is a consortium with Trintoc and Trintopec to develop the gas reserves on the east coast. The Minister said this would involve substantial investment by

the Government through Trintopec and Trintoc.

Said Ramnath: "You will understand, therefore, that we need to be fully convinced about the economics of such a project since we would not wish to be saddled with any more white elephants." He said SECC is being reviewed by a team "which is looking not simply at SECC in the narrow micro sense, but in terms of the wider and more important macro economics and planning."

Ramnath said two major guidelines will underscore the review of the proposals. These are:

- that in our current circumstances, any capital outlay by Government be kept to a minimum or obviated all together, and

- that the overseas partners bring to the project established and recognised expertise, technology and resources such as marketing opportunities.

Ramnath said in the case of one of the proposed plans, Point Fortin has been identified as the location.

Energy Ministry Responsibilities

Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 2 Mar 87 p 5

[Text]

**THE** two major state-owned oil companies as well as all other state enterprises in the energy sector will now fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Energy.

The energy sector companies have been de-linked from the Ministry of Industry and Enterprises, representing a major departure from what had obtained previously.

This was disclosed by Energy Minister Kelvin Ramnath on Thursday night in an address to the general meeting of the South Trinidad Chamber of

Industry and Commerce. The meeting was presided over by the president, Peter Quentrall-Thomas.

This meeting was attended by Trintoc chairman Wilfred Andrew Rose, Trintoc's Managing Director Walton James, Trintopec chairman Hamil Legall, Trintopec General Manager Leonard Lewis, Trinmar General Manager Ken Birchwood among others.

Ramnath described the move as a "fundamental and significant decision," taken by the Government to facilitate the new thrust in a restructured Ministry of Energy. Said he: "State enterprises in the energy sector are now accountable to my Ministry. This represents a fundamental and positive change and would remove the conflict which was evident in the past."

Said Ramnath: "The Ministry of Energy will therefore not only continue to perform the vital function of being a regulatory agency for the energy companies but as well, will have the responsibility of supervising and providing direction to the business and the development of our state corporations engaged in this field."

Ramnath said his Ministry will work closely with the Ministry of Reconstruction and Planning which is responsible for overall national planning. Energy companies, he said, will be expected to perform at the highest level of efficiency and productivity. He said these companies will have to follow stringent guidelines which have been established for all state enterprises.

Ramnath said Government was satisfied that the new role of the Ministry of Energy was critical in achieving optimum development of the energy sector. This was necessary, he said, if the country was to receive the full benefit of the tremendous investment in the energy and energy-based industries.

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BRIEFS

GRENADA-GOODS PRICES--St George's, Wednesday (CANA)--Grenada's Prime Minister Herbert Blaize says the recent abolition of the dual-exchange rate by Trinidad and Tobago would have some impact on trade between the two countries. Speaking in Parliament, Blaize said that under the new rate Trinidadian importers would have to pay more for goods, resulting in more TT dollars for Grenadian suppliers who sell vegetables and fresh fruit. "Whereas EC\$1,000 worth of goods shipped at the old exchange rates would cost a Trinidadian importer approximately TT\$885, excluding shipping and port charges, under the new rate, the cost would now be TT\$1,333. He is concerned, however, that Port of Spain's plans to diversify and expand its agricultural base would mean less business for Grenadian traders. Blaize said the inevitable result would be that consumers in Trinidad and Tobago would have to pay higher prices for local produce. "Grenadian exports of those commodities had cornered a portion of that market in the light of little domestic production; available local supplies in the near future will erode the inelasticity of demand imports previously enjoyed," he said. Blaize said Grenadian producers would have to reduce their export prices as well as seek alternative markets. [Text] [Port-of-Spain DAILY EXPRESS in English 26 Feb 87 p 2] /9274

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